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"TO THE FAR HORIZON." Tani and Allen Petersen aboard their Chinese junk, the *Hummel Hummel*.

E. ALLEN PETERSEN

*Hummel*  
*Hummel*



VANTAGE PRESS, INC., NEW YORK

*The poem "A Ship for Singapore," by Daniel Whitehead  
Hicky, originally appeared in the January 1932 issue of McCall's  
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*To Tani*

*one of the best deep-water sailors who  
ever swung aloft in a bosun's chair*

## *Ship for Singapore*

By *Daniel Whitehead Hicky*

A ship is sailing for Singapore.  
O heart, be swift and latch the door!

My fire burns bright and the shadows fall  
In yellow rhythms along the wall.  
My love sleeps near and her dreams are deep,  
Her lips a rose that has fallen asleep.  
The fire burns bright and the candles glow,  
And I must not go—I must not go!

There is no peace I can know tonight  
Though my love sleeps near and the fire burns bright,  
For stars will call from an Indian sky  
And a cold moon haunt me, blowing by.  
The sea's wild horses will leap and fly,  
Foam on their manes and wind in their eye!

O heart, be swift and latch the door,  
A ship is sailing for Singapore!

# *Contents*

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. <i>The Shanghai Gesture</i>	15
II. <i>Ports of Mystery</i>	25
III. <i>Out Where the Whales Play</i>	53
IV. <i>Sea Fever</i>	69
V. <i>Southward Ho</i>	79
VI. <i>Vengeance of the Shark God</i>	99
VII. <i>Bananas and Iguanas</i>	115
VIII. <i>Two Against the Sea</i>	129
IX. <i>Ships That Pass in the Night</i>	153
X. <i>Blue Water and Green Islands</i>	171
XI. <i>A Closed Port Again</i>	197
XII. <i>"You Will Sail to Honolulu"</i>	211
XIII. <i>Storm at Sea</i>	223
XIV. <i>Shipwreck!</i>	237
XV. <i>War! And Farewell Hummel Hummel</i>	251



# *Illustrations*

	<i>Facing Page</i>
"TO THE FAR HORIZON"	Frontispiece
THE BOW OF OUR DREAM SHIP	16
ON THE SHANGHAI WATERFRONT	16
THE LEE RAIL UNDER	40
"WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE . . ."	40
THE MATE WITH A DOLPHIN	60
WE SIGHT A SHIP!	60
WE CROSS THE MIGHTY PACIFIC	64
FIRST STOP FOR REPAIRS	70
THE CAPTAIN AT HIS CHART TABLE	74
SKIPPER WITH FIRST MATE	74
CHRISTMAS DINNER AT SEA	86
TANI'S GALLEY	86
AFTER THE GALE OFF GUATEMALA	108
IN A QUIET PANAMANIAN COVE	116
IGUANA READY FOR THE POT	120
THE CAPTAIN CHECKS A LINE	134
OUR CRAFT TAKES TO THE AIR	148
SHOVING OFF	148
THE SING-SING BOX	162
TANI WASHES DISHES	162
THE SHARK THAT CAME FOR DINNER	180
SAMOAN HOSPITALITY	180
THE SKIPPER PLAYS A NEW ROLE	252



*Hummel*  
*Hummel*





# *CHAPTER* **I**



## *The Shanghai Gesture*

WE HAD ARRIVED IN SHANGHAI ON OUR HONEYMOON, TANI AND I, and now the city was falling in ruin about us. The Japanese army was driving the Chinese back, and the city was undergoing shelling and aerial bombing. This was before World War II, but a pattern was being set. The foreign population was fleeing by ship, the only possible way of escape from the dying city. The larger steamers had long since departed for Manila and Yokohama, their passenger lists overcrowded. A few small coastal vessels whose captains dared not dock for fear of the mobs waiting to swarm aboard, lay anchored in the Whangpoo. The fortunate ones who could obtain passage were being loaded by launches shuttling to and from shore. But these coastal vessels were taking people only as far as Hong Kong. That was far enough for the hysterical ones whose only thought was to leave Shanghai. It was not far enough for us. Hong Kong, overcrowded, with prices soaring, would mean for us only that we would be stranded in another port. But we could not stay stranded in Shanghai either, for two very good reasons. The city, once called the Paris of the Orient, was now no place to enjoy a honeymoon, and we could not live indefinitely without an income. Our capital was limited.

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

As happens so many times when you are grasping for a means to an end, a very simple solution to our problem began to form in my mind. For twenty years I had been a frustrated yachtsman, reading yachting magazines, but never owning a yacht, or even a sailing dinghy. I had dreamed of one day owning a sailing boat and taking off on a vagabonding voyage. Yes, ever since those years I had spent as a lad on a great square-rigged sailing ship, I had promised myself that one day I would be the captain of my own ship, free to chart my own course across the great Pacific. Now was the hour. Fate had created the circumstance. I had but to grasp the opportunity and my dream would be realized.

I hastily explained my plan to my breathless bride as we rushed to the office of our friend, Captain Scurr, an agent for one of the local shipping companies, and an old China hand. He brought out a bottle and some glasses as I blurted out my great idea.

"Now as I gather it," he said, "you have an idea of purchasing a yacht and sailing home. Well, it's a splendid plan and I'm all for it, but, old fellow, there's not a decent yacht to be had. The seaworthy ones have all left, chartered at ridiculous figures to carry refugees south."

My face must have shown my disappointment. He hastily refilled my glass.

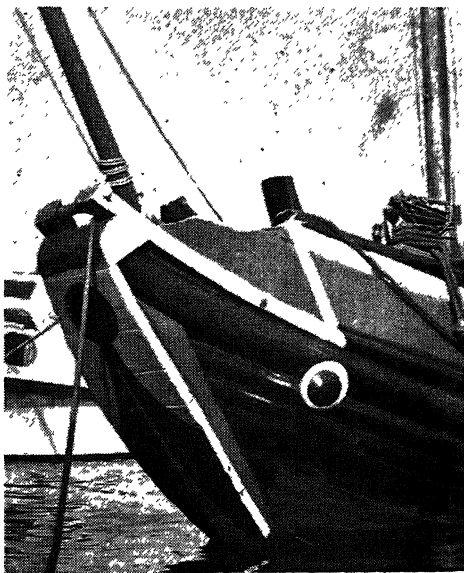
"But there is a way of doing much the same thing, if you are a good sailor." He paused. "Sail in a Chinese junk."

"A Chinese junk!" I gasped. "I want to get away from Shanghai, to sail across the Pacific to California. I don't want to commit suicide."

He chuckled. "Oh, it wouldn't be as bad as all that. They are seaworthy craft, you know. I've sailed in a number of junks up and down the coast and I have a theory that junks were navigating across the Pacific ages ago. Let me tell you something about these junks, Petersen.

"The Chinese junk you see today had its beginnings in the dim past as a sea raft, examples of which are seen today in the balsa rafts of Peru and the great platform catamarans of the Southwest Pacific. The junk developed along lines entirely different from those used by the primitive canoe sailors of Europe. In contrast to western craft, which are characterized by side

THE BOW OF OUR DREAM SHIP. "Bows of Chinese junks are painted to resemble a sea dragon, and a bulging eye is always placed on each side. The junkmen say, 'No got eye, no can find way.'"



ON THE SHANGHAI WATERFRONT. "I decided to investigate a small junk moored at the French Bund. Leaping from one protesting sampan to another, I finally boarded the little junk and . . . decided she would be just the craft for our flight." (The author, with Nick, after return to Shanghai.)



## THE SHANGHAI GESTURE

planking covering a framework consisting of a keel, stem and stern posts, and internal ribs, the junk has no stern or stern posts, and the heavy, widely spaced ribs are placed after the side planking is in position. A flat bow above the water line prevents the craft from driving into a heady sea, and consequently a junk never 'ships them green' over the bow. Only the lower half of the stern is closed. The open part gives easy access to the rudder and permits the free use of the *yulah*, or long sculling sweep, with which a junk can be propelled.

"These Oriental mariners were the first to use fore-and-aft sails to navigate against unfavorable winds, and they evolved centerboards and lee boards to aid in tacking. Watertight bulkheads were built into junks centuries before the European shipbuilder thought of this safety factor. I've seen junks come into port after passing through a China Sea typhoon with the entire forepart of the junk gone but still afloat, thanks to a watertight bulkhead.

"A dozen or more different types of junks are found along the China coast. Each type is distinguished by its hull colors and hull design, depending on whether the junk hails from Hong Kong, Foochow, Wenchow, Ningpo or one of the other ship-building ports. Chinese artists have developed some exotic and colorful designs. Some hulls are of unpainted wood rubbed with tung oil. Bows are painted to resemble a sea dragon or a fish, and a bulging eye, black iris painted on a white cornea, is always placed on each side. The junkmen say, 'No got eye, no can find way.' The characteristic high sterns are elaborately decorated with the phoenix, dragons and men, with the junk's name in stately characters."

"Captain, you've got me interested," I said, when he paused to pour himself a drink. "But have any of these junks sailed on extensive voyages?"

"Have they now," he snorted. "Junks were sailing on trading expeditions along the shores of India and on as far as Aden on the Red Sea over five hundred years ago. Chinese mariners were bartering for birds' nests, trepang, and gold among the East Indies and the Philippines long before the European navigators sailed those seas. Why, in 1420, a Chinese junk was driven by a storm to the western coast of Australia. Undismayed by being in unfamiliar waters, her crew circumnavigated that continent and,

upon returning home, made a porcelain map of 'that land of the south,' which they presented to the emperor. And in more recent times, 1846 to be exact, a group of adventurous Englishmen sailed the one-hundred-and-sixty-foot Chinese junk *Keying* from Hong Kong to England."

The Captain was warming to what apparently was a favorite subject with him. I glanced furtively at Tani. She was wide eyed, thinking beyond us out to the middle of the great Pacific and a cockleshell of a boat.

"Now then, Petersen," the Captain resumed. "Suppose you sailed to the States in a junk, and then back again to Shanghai. This fracas will be over in six months and it will be business as usual again. Here, I'll show you on this chart. You sail from Shanghai, here, easterly, coasting the islands of Japan. Then, you sail on the great circle route across the North Pacific to Seattle or San Francisco. On your return you sail westward, touching Hawaii and the Philippines. On these routes you would have the advantage of prevailing winds and currents."

"On the return voyage," I said, "I could drop farther south, couldn't I? Below the equator and then through the South Sea islands and then reach China."

"Right enough, you could, but that, my boy, would be an epic voyage for a junk."

"But Chinese junks have reached the coast of North America?"

"True. Captain Ward sailed the *Amoy* across in 1923 and other large junks have been rumored to have reached your shores. None have sailed, so far as is known, coastwise to South America and thence back to China via the South Seas."

"Then if I completed this voyage in a junk," I replied, "it could be said that Magellan may not have been the first navigator to cross the broad Pacific. The Chinese and Polynesians were doing it before he arrived through the straits."

"That's right," Captain Scurr said. "And even though you may not upset any theories about Pacific migrations, Petersen, you would have a devil of a fine adventure."

"Tani," I asked turning to my wife, "what do you think of the idea?"

"Well, I'm anxious to leave Shanghai," she replied, "anxious



## THE SHANGHAI GESTURE

enough to leave even in a Chinese junk. But about coming back I'm not so sure. Let's wait till we get across the Pacific one way first. Then there's the small item of getting the junk. That's about as far as I'm thinking, except maybe the horrible thought of getting seasick."

Captain Scurr gave me a couple of leads to places where he thought I might be able to purchase a junk, and we proceeded to run these down. Three days was all the time it took and we were right back where we started. There were no junks to be had, regardless of price. The Japanese were commandeering all the larger ones they could find and were burning all the smaller ones. Then Captain Scurr was called suddenly to Hong Kong and we were left with our big wonderful idea and little else.

Days passed while the tides of war ebbed and flowed over Shanghai, and daily it became more difficult to live. In desperation I decided to investigate a small junk moored at the French Bund. I had passed her many times but because of her small size I had not bothered to give her a second look. Dozens of native sampans were moored gunwale to gunwale around her, and from these swarming craft there rose a babble of voices. A terrible stench hung over the area caused by a nearby sewer outfall. Yet in these unfavorable surroundings I discovered our dream ship. Leaping from one protesting sampan to another, I finally boarded the little junk. Sandwiched in among the *loudah* or Chinese boatman and his large family, I surveyed the little ship. She appeared not so small now, as I stood on deck and I decided at once she would be just the craft for our flight to California. From the boatman I learned that her owner, a Mr. Emmermann, might be willing to sell.

Shortly thereafter, I was seated in Mr. Emmermann's office discussing the junk. She had been built at Ningpo in 1936, and he had been using her for pleasure-sailing on the river. He assured me she was in good shape, but I was never able to check her bottom as there were no slip ways available. Once at low tide while she squatted on the slimy mud I had a view of part of her bottom. A week of bargaining, and two hundred and fifty United States dollars made me owner and captain of a Chinese junk.

Our dream ship was thirty-six feet in over-all length with a

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

nine-foot beam and a draft of two and a half feet. She was painted black, red, white and yellow in elaborate design. Her two masts were rigged in Chinese style. The husky thirty-foot mainmast was set well forward and carried a huge blood-red canvas lateen sail reinforced with bamboo battens. The foremast, swept at an angle in the bow, seemed to be a jibboom in the process of evolution and carried a small replica of the mainsail. Neither mast had stays! The roomy main cabin was set amidships with an area about nine by nine feet, with six feet, one inch head room. The stern was wide but not quite as high as in most junks. A tremendous rudder that extended two feet below the keel hung in a heavy wooden socket and could be hauled up on deck. The overhanging stern was open with a convenient cross bar on each side of the rudder post where one could sit. This was the Chinese idea of outside plumbing although on the *Hummel Hummel*, the name of our dream ship, there was a modern toilet below decks.

Forward of the mainmast, a hatch led down into a sleeping compartment with two bunks. Forward of this, another hatch opened into a rope locker and on deck there was a Spanish windlass for hauling up the anchor. The bow was not sharp, as in western-type ships, but flat, particularly above the water line. On each side of the bow was a bulging eye, which Tani thought was very soulful. The *Hummel Hummel* was built almost entirely of camphor wood and heavily constructed. She was practically flat bottomed with but a six-inch keel. Her smooth bottom planking was an inch and a half thick. Starting from just below the waterline, hand-hewn logs seven inches thick made up the sides. Serving as horizontal ribs, these timbers gave the junk tremendous strength. Five three-inch-thick wooden bulkheads divided the interior and added to her strength and proved to be an important safety factor on more than one occasion. The *Hummel Hummel* had no outside ballast but carried a ton of iron and approximately one thousand pounds of rock inside.

That night, over a cheap map, I pointed out to Tani our proposed route from Shanghai to Yokohama, Japan, a distance of one thousand miles. If all went well that far, we would tackle the Pacific.

Hectic days of preparation for the voyage followed. We spent

## THE SHANGHAI GESTURE

long evenings making out a list of stores, and more evenings cutting it down. We found all too soon that the initial cost of a ship is nothing compared to the costs of outfitting and maintenance. Charts were expensive; so were navigation books, which I had to have because I intended to learn navigation on the way. I priced a sextant, but the lowest selling price was ninety dollars, Shanghai money, which was more than I could spend. The next day, I attended an auction where three sextants were put up and I bought a good one for sixteen dollars and eighty cents, Shanghai money. Ten dollars also bought a second-hand compass. It was an old dry-point type but it was better than none at all, or so I thought at the time. We bought pots and pans and dishes. There seemed to be so many things to buy, yet all of them appeared to be important at the time. The *Hummel Hummel* had one set of sails which would have to carry us to America. There were blocks and rigging, but I had to buy extra rope, paint, and kerosene for the primus stoves and lanterns. I hired two Chinese carpenters to change the interior a bit so as to give us more room in the main cabin, and to put in bunks and a closet.

The days sped by swiftly, but still there were many things to be done. Never having outfitted a ship for such a voyage, we were not sure of just what we should take, and whether or not we were taking along a lot of useless stores. Believe it or not, we were to start on our journey without having sailed the junk once. This was not due to any neglect on my part, but was caused by the war-time conditions on the river. I was full of confidence, and Tani had confidence in me. That was all I needed. The *loudah* said the tide would be right early on the morning of the fifteenth. We would sail down the Whangpoo River to Woosung, which would take us about three hours, and there wait for the next tide before sailing into the Yangtse River on our way to the ocean. It was exciting even to think about—the ocean, the heaving, rolling ocean, and we would be out there on our ship.

The day before departure all the food, stores and extra gear were stowed aboard. The *loudah* promised to have the forty-gallon water tank filled. I called on Johansen of the *Evening Post and Mercury* to purchase a forty-five caliber Webley revolver he had, as the weapon might be needed to fight off the pirates that

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

now infested the China coast. Johansen was kind enough to drive me around to complete my last-minute shopping. Late in the afternoon, I arrived home laden down with packages. Tani had not been idle during my absence and had everything packed. I hired some coolies to take all of our belongings, except two suitcases, down to the junk. We followed in rickshas to see that nothing went astray.

The junk was nearly buried under boxes, cases and bundles. We tried to put some of the stuff away, but it did not seem that we would ever get it all stowed properly. Besides all the other items, we had a crate of three live chickens which we stowed under the stern deck. Night had fallen and we were still struggling with the gear when Johansen, his wife, and the Emmermanns came aboard. There was hardly room in the cabin for our visitors.

"Say, Mr. Emmermann," I said. "I forgot in all the excitement to ask what the name of the junk means. Is *Hummel Hummel* Chinese?"

"No," he laughed. "It's a German slang expression. It means the same as when you thumb your nose at anyone."

"That's a suitable name for our ship," I said. "It expresses our feelings—the Shanghai gesture."

## *CHAPTER* **II**



## *Ports of Mystery*

AT DAYBREAK THE NEXT MORNING WE STEPPED OUT OF A RICKSHA onto Shanghai's teeming river front. Eagerly, we looked out to where our dream ship lay.

"Look there!" Tani gasped. "Our ship's afire! See the smoke coming from the bow."

"Now don't be so nervous," I reassured her. "I'm just as excited about starting as you are . . . but there is no fire. Remember Amah telling us last night that the junk should be prepared for the journey? Well, that smoke is from incense sticks she's stuck in the bow. There are more astern."

"That's right," replied my wife. "She was raised on a junk, wasn't she? And isn't that Tasuo standing there beside her?"

We drew closer and watched Amah and the cook engaged in the ancient eye-washing ceremony. Having lighted incense in the bow and stern, they were preparing to wash the bulging eyes. Standing on the edge of a sampan, Tasuo poured a little wine from an earthen jar onto one of the eyes. Amah carefully rubbed it over the entire surface. When they had thus insured good vision in both eyes, they drew from their jackets long strips of red prayer papers, inscribed with gold characters. Burning these

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

one by one, they circled the junk three times, chanting in high-pitched voices. When the ceremony was over, Tani and I went aboard and thanked them.

"No washee eye, no burn joss paper, bi'm by finish," Amah explained solemnly.

Friday, April 15, 1938, was the day we started on our great adventure. Homeward bound in a Chinese junk! The *loudah* and his family went as far as Woosung with us, so we were able to navigate Shanghai's river traffic without any trouble. He was an old hand at sailing a junk, and I watched his every move to learn all I could during the short time he was with us. But I took time to say a silent farewell to fantastic Shanghai.

After getting under weigh, I found that the *loudah* had not filled the water tank, so we had to stop her at the water company's wharf down the river. On checking supplies, I noticed that there was only one primus stove instead of the two that were supposed to be aboard. The *loudah* claimed that Emmermann had sent his boy down for one but I suspected the *loudah* had taken it. That left us with one old stove that did not appear to be in good working order. I began to worry as to how much other stuff was missing, and what had been left undone. We reached Woosung without further trouble, and anchored to wait for the proper tide before proceeding into the Yangtse River. I paid off the *loudah* with the last of my Shanghai money and he and his family left in a sampan.

About mid-afternoon, other junks anchored nearby began raising sail, so I judged that the tide was turning. It had been a long time since I had hauled up any anchors and although the *Hummel Hummel's* anchor weighed only one hundred and fifty pounds, it seemed to weigh a ton before I finally got it aboard. Tani stood by the tiller while I hoisted the bamboo-ribbed mainsail and then the foresail. As the sails filled to the breeze, the *Hummel Hummel* moved ahead. We were under weigh! Sailing our own ship for the first time! Our eyes met and we smiled, confident and happy. It seemed that we almost knew how Columbus, Magellan and the others must have felt . . . for we, too, were sailing for the New World.

The weather was warm and we had a good breeze. In four or



## PORTS OF MYSTERY

five hours, I told Tani, we would reach the ocean. Mr. Emmermann had given me an excellent chart of the river, showing all the buoys, which were spaced about five miles apart. Navigation of the Yangtse is tricky, particularly at the mouth, due to shifting sandbanks and strong currents. This accounted for the number of half-submerged wrecks shown on the chart. At six, we had some bread, pickled beets and bananas, as we had decided against cooking a hot meal because there were so many other more urgent things to do. After sunset, the wind freshened and shifted to a head wind. The *Hummel Hummel* slid along first on one tack and then the other, as I picked up the lighted buoys. By the time we reached the entrance of the great river, a murky night had settled down and I could no longer see any buoy lights. To complicate things, the wind increased in force, and soon a short breaking sea was running. Even though sail was lowered to half, the junk heeled over alarmingly while I hung on, straining my eyes to see what lay ahead. During one sickening lurch, there came a crashing sound from the cabin.

"The dishes," Tani gasped as she crawled across the slanting deck to the hatch. Seconds later I heard her calling, "We've sprung a leak! We're sinking!"

Somehow I managed to secure the tiller and made my way below. Ankle-deep water littered with our precious stores sloshed from side to side with every roll. Hastily searching with a flashlight, I found two seams near the stern where a steady stream of water spouted. There we were in a veritable sieve at the very worst part of the Yangtse; a couple of landlubbers caught out after dark in a fresh blow, surrounded by banks and rocks, and dragged along by swift currents. To make the night more dismal and confused, the compass light refused to work, and Tani had to hold the flashlight on the compass while I turned the junk around. Had it not been for the compass, I would not have known whether I was going up river or down. I lowered more sail, for the junk seemed like a thing possessed. Then a light flashed in the darkness, and soon another, and I was back in the channel. Tani held the course while I went below to caulk the leaking seams, but my efforts were only partly successful. About midnight, we were back at the mouth of the Whangpoo, but we

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

could not enter without an idea of how the tide was running. For the next few hours, I tacked inshore and off, trying to hold my position. At four o'clock, I saw the shadowy outline of a small island and decided to run in close and anchor. Before I could get the sails down or drop the anchor, the junk jammed her nose hard into a mud bank. We were aground! Too weary to care, we fell into our bunks exhausted. Our hands were red and swollen from unaccustomed pulling on ropes. Every muscle in our bodies was strained beyond normal capacity. I did not remain conscious long enough to curse junk sailing.

We woke some hours later, and when I stepped on deck, I received a shock. The junk was high and dry on a muddy beach, with the river fifty feet astern. Beyond the mudflat stretched a low bit of land covered with tall grass and a few scrubby trees.

"There's nothing we can do about this situation until the tide comes in," I said. "Let's have a hot breakfast. Do you realize we haven't eaten a good meal for over twenty-four hours?"

This was the time for the kerosene stove to become temperamental. I struggled and sweated with it for an hour but it would not light. Realizing that if we were to get any breakfast we would have to cook it on something else, I resorted to building a wood fire in an empty kerosene can. After much smoke and soot, we got together a fairly good breakfast, only to find we were too weary to be interested in food. Later, we bailed out innumerable buckets of water from the cabin and stern compartment. When that job was done, I remarked to Tani, rather foolishly, "Well, at least there's no water coming in now."

About noon, the junk appeared to be floating, and we rushed to the windlass to heave up the anchor. Yes, Tani helped to turn the squeaking, groaning, wooden winch, for the anchor lay buried in soft clinging mud, and for a time defied our combined efforts to break it loose. At last we freed it and hauled it to deck level, but the bow of the junk was still fast in the mud. With twenty-foot bamboo poles we fought fiercely to free our ship, but the junk was too unwieldy for us to handle. When we freed the bow, the current would swing the stern into the sticky mud before we could fend it off. At times, one of us would sink the pole too deep in the mud and have it nearly wrenched out of our hands before we were able to free it.

## PORTS OF MYSTERY

How Tani stood up under such man-killing work is beyond me. Our lips were parched, our bodies trembled from the muscular strain. Then, suddenly, success! The junk floated. We poled along the shore, hoping to round the end of the small island and sail away. The river current proved too strong, however, and, before we had proceeded far, the junk was fast in the mud again. This time it was much nearer the grass-covered bank.

We gave up. We were too weary even to hold the bamboo poles, let alone shove with them. We did not bother to build a fire for our noon meal but ate pickled beets, bananas and dried prunes. I mused over the strange fate that caused me to chase so persistently after a junk and then to run into such bad luck sailing one.

About this time I noticed a silent group of Chinese men sitting on the bank, watching us. I shouted to them, holding up one of the bamboo poles to convey what I wanted. They talked and laughed but gave no sign of understanding. But presently four of them stripped off their clothes and waded out to the junk. When their shaved heads, each with a gold band in the left ear lobe, appeared over the bulwarks, I had a shock, for I suddenly remembered about river pirates. These husky fellows paid not the slightest attention to either of us, but picked up the poles and soon had the junk free. My suggestion that they could now leave fell on deaf ears. Methodically they poled us into a small cove where a rickety wharf was crowded with a Chinese welcoming committee.

The moment the junk touched the wharf, the mob rushed aboard. Tani and I retreated before them to the stern, where we took up positions that would give us the greatest protection. Tani stepped down into the cabin and I stood in the entrance in such a way that no one could get in back of me. They seemed friendly enough and were extremely curious. They poked their heads down the hatches, peered into the cabin, felt the sails, and all the while kept up a sing-song conversation. When their curiosity was somewhat satisfied, one of them spoke to me in pidgin English.

"Boy wanchee money."

"How much boy want?" I asked.

This question called for a long conversation in which most of the men on the junk joined.

"Four dollar," the spokesman finally said.

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

This was entirely reasonable but I did not have four Chinese dollars with me. After much searching, and by robbing her coin collection, Tani handed me two dollars in small coins and paper money.

"Here," I said firmly to the leader of the crowd, "two dollars, no got more cash."

The man took the money with a puzzled expression while the others crowded around him. For a few minutes there was a great jabbering, then: "Boy he pushee ship, four dollars, no two dollar."

"No got four dollar," I replied. "Two dollar, no more, savvy?"

There was much talking after that and then everyone appeared to be settling down for a stay. I wanted to get going and did not wish to sit there arguing. Still, if I began ordering them off, they might cause trouble.

"You go now," I said to the leader. "Go shore side."

He grinned but made no move to leave. Then a bright idea dawned on me.

"Tani, hand me camera. I'm going to see if these rascals would like to have their pictures taken."

"Look," I said to the leader. "Look-see box savvy? I make big picture."

They recognized the camera all right, and there were many exclamations and remarks. I hoped they would do what I had in mind.

"All right," I said. "Boy all go shore. Stand over there. I take picture."

They were still undecided about it, but I started things going by walking through the crowd and shoving some ahead of me to the landing. When the others saw me step ashore, they followed.

"Over here," I said as I herded them back from the water's edge. "Stand here. I take picture."

Finally, I had them all in a group some yards away from the junk. I raised my camera and went through the motions of focusing it.

"Don't move," I kept shouting as I backed aboard the junk, still pointing the camera at the huddled group.

They were standing as still as statues.

"All right, Tani. Cast off the rope."

## PORTS OF MYSTERY

We worked fast. Setting the camera down, I picked up a pole and, with a mighty heave, sent the junk away from the wharf. The Chinese recovered from their surprise with a shout and rushed to the wharf's edge, but we were far enough away by then. I hoisted sail and under a light breeze the *Hummel Hummel* moved out from the island.

"Well done, Captain," Tani remarked after we had time to relax. "I was beginning to get worried about those men."

I headed back across the river, but so much time had been lost that it was late afternoon before we arrived at the entrance of the Whangpoo. A number of large junks that were coming up the Yangtse did not try to enter, but anchored downstream a short distance from the entrance. This meant that the tide was not right, so I decided to anchor near them and follow them when they set sail. The river current was strong, and, before we reached water shallow enough to anchor, we were at least a mile downstream from the other junks.

The stove still refused to work and we had another cold meal. A murky black night descended suddenly, and with it came wind and rain. The storm started off gently enough but with the passing hours the wind blew a regular gale. Steep, white-crested waves charged against the junk, rolling her violently. We spent a miserable night huddled on the afterdeck, wondering when the junk would capsize.

At daybreak, the black clouds, the wind and the rain hurried away from the sun's first rays. Cold and stiff, I struggled to my feet to see where we were. The junk had dragged anchor and we were now another mile or so farther downstream. I had probably anchored on a ledge, and when the blow came up, the anchor had slipped off into deep water. It was lucky for us that it had caught hold on another bank, or we might have gone many miles down the river. We got under weigh at once. While we were tacking our way upstream, we bailed out the water that had accumulated in the bilges. All the junks of the previous day had entered the Whangpoo when we arrived at the entrance. Hoping that we had not missed the tide, I steered our craft into the channel.

On the upper bank, where the Whangpoo and the Yangtse rivers meet, is the Woosung fort. Extending from the high, grim

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

walls of this bastion out into the swirling junction of the two rivers is a rocky, partly submerged breakwater. A ship entering the Whangpoo passes between a low river bank on one side and the sharp tip of the breakwater on the other. The currents are strong and changing in the channel.

Boldly I steered the *Hummel Hummel* in. The wind was against us and I had to tack in a narrow area. After we had rounded the tip of the breakwater and had sailed a few boat lengths beyond, the junk suddenly and mysteriously went out of control. She would not answer the helm! The breeze had not slackened, the sails were full, yet the junk did not move ahead. I threw the rudder hard over to port and then to starboard in a vain attempt to gain steerage way. In despair, I realized that the current was carrying us toward the submerged rocks of the breakwater. It was as though some demon of that muddy river had the junk by the keel and was slowly pushing her to her doom upon the jagged rocks.

Tani grabbed one of the bamboo poles and stood ready to ward us off should we hit the rocks. Closer and closer we came. Then suddenly the junk stopped her drifting and began to move ahead rapidly. Still she would not answer the helm and now we were heading straight toward the Woosung fort. I could see Japanese sentries on top of the high walls and I wondered if they would fire on us. The junk, like a thing possessed, would not turn from her course. There was only one thing to do, lower sail before we battered the bow to pieces. I let go the tiller and started to rush forward only to run headlong into the protruding end of the huge sweep lashed to the cabin deck. The impact staggered me and blood ran into my eyes from a cut on my forehead.

"Allen!" Tani cried, rushing to my side. "What did you do?"

"I'm all right," I said, shaking my head to clear the fuzziness from my brain. "Quick, there is no time to lose."

We lowered sail and dropped anchor. It was none too soon for we were at the base of the wall. I looked up, expecting to see rifles pointing down at us, but saw no one. We were out of the swirling currents, and after pulling up the anchor, I was able to pole the junk a little farther upstream. Then we shoved off from the shallow water and hoisted the mainsail. This time the junk

## PORTS OF MYSTERY

behaved and before long we dropped anchor for the night in Woosung Cove. Quiet water was never more appreciated. The next day we hoped to reach Shanghai.

The sing-song voices of the Chinese junkmen hauling up their sails woke us at daybreak. Junks that had anchored around us during the night were preparing to leave for up-river. If we followed, the incoming tide would help us along. By the time I got the anchor up and set sail, the other junks were well on their way. The trip upstream was rather uneventful, and at last we rounded Pootung Point where a fleet of huge junks was anchored.

"What's good for the other junks is good enough for our junk," I remarked to my helpmate, and headed toward them. The spot where I anchored was a clear space surrounded by dozens of junks that towered over our small craft like skyscrapers over a cottage.

It was only then that I began to wonder about my choice of anchorage. We were across the river from Shanghai. The junk men had a bad reputation. What might they do to us, cut off as we were from all possible help? We were sitting on deck discussing these problems, when suddenly Tani exclaimed, "Look at those men! Are they coming over here?"

"Golly, what a tough-looking crew! They're coming to visit us all right. You stay near the cabin. I'll see what they want."

Sculling a small sampan swiftly toward the *Hummel Hummel* were six junk men with shaved heads and gold rings in their ear lobes. Crouched in the bow was a skinny old man with a black patch over one eye and two stained teeth protruding from his open mouth. Fang Tooth caught hold of my anchor chain and twisted his face into a grin.

"No good," he said pointing vigorously downward. "Plenty ship. Catch um anklar."

Without waiting word from me, the junkmen set to work with a will. First, they pulled the slack anchor chain into the sampan and, when the chain was taut, one of them fastened a rope to it below the surface of the water. Then, using the buoyancy of their sampan, they maintained a steady pull on the anchor. Every few minutes, accompanied by a weird chant, they all heaved on the rope, the old man leading the chanting in a high, shrill voice. It was apparent the anchor was fouled on some submerged object,

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

and I began to fear they would never break it loose. Abruptly the singing stopped; someone gave a shout, and they began hauling in the chain. When they dragged the anchor into the sampan, there were many exclamations and they showed me where one of the flukes was missing. Even though the anchor was useless, I was glad to save the chain, and endeavored to tell them so, but my rescuers had not finished their job yet. Chattering and laughing, they put the anchor on board, took the end of a mooring rope and tied us astern of a huge junk.

"There are sailors for you," I remarked to Tani. "The comradeship of the sea."

Later I went ashore to see Mr. Emmermann, for I wanted to tell him how badly the junk leaked. When his Chinese office boy saw me, he acted as though he were seeing a ghost and slowly backed away.

"Mr. Emmermann not in," he said, before he fled through a door. I never saw Mr. Emmermann. Whether he purposely tried to avoid me or not I do not know but I have always puzzled over the look on his office boy's face.

A few of my remaining precious American dollars were changed into Shanghai money. When I got back aboard my junk, I waved to my rescuers and one of them came over in the sampan. I gave him some cash to be divided among his shipmates.

It was wonderful how friendly those Chinese junkmen were to us. A day or two after our arrival, most of the large junks began to get under weigh. Our mooring rope was passed from junk to junk and then to government launches, until we found ourselves tied up alongside of a schooner flying the American flag. It was in this way that we met Nick and Vic. These two young White Russians, together with three others, were living aboard the schooner. When they learned that we were intending to sail to America, they startled me by asking if I would take them along. At first I thought they were joking but soon found they meant it. I told them that we could not carry much food or water; that the small ship would be crowded with four people. They pleaded to be taken, pointing out to me the difficult life they had in Shanghai. I told them frankly that I had very little money and could not pay them any wages. They did not want wages, they



## PORTS OF MYSTERY

said, they wanted to get to America. They would sleep on deck, eat anything, and work hard if only I would take them along.

"I'm not sure that you can even get into the United States," I said.

"We take a chance," replied Nick. "I know plenty Russian fellers try to get to America. They not let him. On junk, Mr. Petersen, maybe they don't care. You take us along. We do anything."

They finally talked us into it. Neither of them had any experience in junk sailing, but I felt added hands would be useful. It was agreed that we would take them as far as Japan, and if the United States authorities there said it was all right, they could go on to California with us. There was no use talking to the consular officials in Shanghai as one received little information from them. The next few days were spent in repairing the leaking seams, buying more food, and taking on extra water—and the most needed item of all, a new primus stove.

While lashing our oversized sampan on deck, Nick heaved too heavily on a rope. It parted and he fell overboard. Vic and I fished him out, sputtering, but none the worse for his early morning dip in the polluted Whangpoo.

After this simple christening, we got under weigh at six o'clock, two weeks after our first attempt. Our new shipmates were as happy as we to be leaving. We faced astern and shouted our farewells to Shanghai, the Pearl of the Whangpoo, and, facing around, we talked of California, just across the Pacific.

By nine A.M. we had reached Woosung fort and, with a favorable tide, crossed the bar into the great Yangtse River. By late afternoon we had reached the Tungsha Banks, approximately fifty miles from Shanghai. A light breeze, which we had all day, freshened from the southeast toward sunset and kicked up a choppy sea. The *Hummel Hummel*, now eager to reach the open sea, smashed through the waves, throwing spray clear over the foresail. Later, I put the junk on the other tack to avoid the Adriane and Amherst rocks that lay to the eastward of us. These rocks had claimed many a ship and I did not want to be anywhere near them at night. By seven, the wind had slackened to a light breeze, and then a strong incoming tide started moving us

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

back into the river. We found a five-fathom patch off the Tungsha Banks and dropped our hook. In the swirl of the strong tidal currents, the junk bobbed around like a hooked fish until midnight, when the tide turned and we set sail again. The steadying influence of the sails was a relief.

We had been on the lookout for Japanese warships ever since dark. Suddenly I was aware of a low black shape coming up swiftly astern.

"Here comes a Japanese patrol," I said. "They'll put a light on us in a minute."

"Maybe they won't see us," Tani said.

"Vich is vorse?" Vic wanted to know. "If dey don't see us, dey run us down; if dey see us, dey stop us."

"I have idea, Mr. Petersen," Nick called out as he jumped down into the cabin, reappearing with a small flag. "Remember German flag you say Mr. Emmermann leave aboard? Now I put it up. Maybe help."

Whereupon he tied the flag to the little pole carrying our wind-sock. Then we huddled around the tiller to give the illusion of a group of Chinese junkmen. The Japanese ship, a destroyer, was quite close before her searchlight beam cut through the darkness and, like an evil eye, swept over the junk. Cautiously I glanced around and saw the flag fluttering in the breeze, clearly illuminated. We waited breathlessly. The destroyer rushed by and her one eye blinked out. We were safe!

Daylight found us hardy mariners off the light buoy at the Yangtse River entrance in an almost flat calm. I could see the Saddle Islands some miles off our starboard bow. We could say now that we had left China and had left the great Yangtse River, although we were to sail on water muddied by this river for many days to come. That morning Tani served us our first real breakfast at sea. And what a meal it was: hot cakes, eggs, jam, bread and coffee. We had been up all night and our appetites did full justice to her cooking.

To my dismay the junk continued to leak, and, on that first morning, we bailed ten gallons of water out of the bilges. There were no definite leaks to be found, but the water seemed to be seeping in everywhere. I recalled then the words of advice given

## PORTS OF MYSTERY

me by Captain Scurr in Shanghai. "Get a good pump. All junks leak like sieves." We had a new pump but the first time we tried it we knew it was not good for the junk. Her bilges were too flat, and, with the rolling and pitching she did, it was impossible to draw up the water. So we discarded it in favor of scoop and bucket. At noon I took a sight of the sun with my sextant. Some prolonged paper work showed that we were fifty miles farther north than we actually were, for I was sure the Saddle Islands had not shifted their position. This error did not worry me unduly, as I had many days ahead in which to improve my navigation. When we finally lost sight of the Saddle Islands and were alone upon the vast sea, we all realized just how small was the *Hummel Hummel*. Nick expressed the general idea when he said, "Sailing on this boat is like walking on the water, you are so close to it."

My early morning watch on the third day out was glorious. The sails drew to an easy breeze and the junk moved lightly over a calm sea, while overhead the clear sky sparkled with a million stars. At five, Tani joined me at the tiller and together we watched the eastern horizon slowly catch fire. The great fire ball was just below the horizon, sending out his cheery reflection, rolling back the night that fled to the westward. A new day!

The sun did not shine very often after that. The winds were contrary, blowing from one point for an hour or two and then shifting to another. Violent rain squalls hit us, and there were days and nights of dripping fog. I had to depend entirely on my compass and soon realized that it was not even worth the bargain price which I had paid. The compass card had a perverse habit of sticking and, before any of us would notice this "slight" deficiency, we would sail off the course. How many times this happened I could only guess. I kept trimming down the card until we could hardly read the points. To tell the truth, after we lost sight of the China coast, none of us knew where we were. In those clinging fogs we might have been going in circles.

Once, while moving through a misty night that hid our bow from view and made us seem to be sailing a half ship, I heard the throbbing of an engine off our weather beam. Every lantern was hurriedly lighted and set on deck from bow to stern. With no foghorn to sound, we brought out frying pans, empty kerosene

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

tins and a police whistle. The throbbing sound drew steadily closer.

"All right," I shouted. "Let's make all the noise we can. That fellow seems to be heading straight for us!"

Pandemonium then broke loose aboard the junk and, if the skipper of the approaching ship heard that racket, he would have sworn a thousand devils had burst from hell. I blew the whistle, the others beat on the pans and tins and shouted for all they were worth. After a few minutes of this racket, we stopped and listened. The rhythmic throbbing of the mystery ship was very close. At any moment I expected to see a bow part the vaporous curtain and ram the junk.

"Let's try again," I shouted, "one, two, three—" and the din we made was loud enough to reach to China. We saw nothing, but the junk rocked slightly in the wash of a passing vessel. Gradually the sound of her engines died away and we were alone with our silence.

We had been at sea a week when, one day, after a series of heavy rain squalls, a delicately colored butterfly flew into the mainsail. It was difficult to understand the tremendous urge that sends these butterflies on migratory flights over the ocean. Carried by the wind, battered by rain, they struggle on until at last, with failing strength, they fly too close to the water and a greedy wave flicks the bit of color from the air.

On another occasion a swallow, so weary it could no longer fly, fluttered down on deck. Tani carried the pitiful thing into the warmth of the cabin and tried to give it water and food. It refused her best efforts, and the next morning it was dead.

The junk floated like a cork and bounced around like one, too. The main cabin, where Tani and I slept, had a port and starboard bunk. I had difficulty sleeping on my side due to the rolling motion, and it was impossible to sleep on my stomach because the bunk was too narrow. The only way I could rest was on my back, and then my stomach would roll back and forth with every motion of the junk. Lying there, covered with damp blankets, I could hear with one ear the waves slapping against the sides, and with the other the water splashing in the bilge. Such conditions are not conducive to sound sleep.

## PORTS OF MYSTERY

Our dream ship leaked like a sieve not only through the hull, but also through the decks. We were a groggy, wet, miserable crew. Junk sailing was proving to be something none of us had bargained for. In my secure confidence while in Shanghai, I had thought the thousand miles between Shanghai and Yokohama would be a simple matter. Shakedown cruise, I had said. We were being shaken down all right, night and day. Tani, valiant cook, engaged in heroic struggles with our two single primus stoves which were not fitted with racks or gimbals. I will always picture her on that crossing, balancing a frying pan on the stove with one hand and hanging on to the bulwarks with the other. Many a pot of coffee slipped off the stove in those days.

Early one fogless night, I sighted a flashing light dead ahead. "A lighthouse!" I shouted, and all hands rushed to the bow to have a look at the comforting sight.

"What land is it?" Tani asked.

"Japan, I hope," I replied. "But I'm not sure, it may be Korea, or it could be the Philippines."

We crowded back into the cabin to huddle over a chart which Tani illuminated with a flashlight. "According to the flashes, it must be Danjo Gunto," I said. "This little spot here. It's a rocky island off the west coast of Japan."

The opportunity to watch our exciting discovery did not last for the wind shifted suddenly to the southwest and began to freshen. Shortly the lighthouse faded from view in a blinding rain squall. By midnight the junk was laboring heavily under her shortened sail, but I dared not carry more canvas for we were lightly ballasted. She leaned dangerously when struck by the blasts of wind. With the storm mounting in fury, our chances of capsizing increased, and I gave the order to let out the sea anchor on some ten fathoms of line, then, fighting like madmen, we clawed at the flapping sails, trying to furl them before they were blown to shreds. Working on the narrow wet foredeck of the junk while she pitched and rolled was dangerous, and, during those careless days of inexperience, we had not learned to tie ourselves on our ship.

After the canvas was secured to the booms, we stood on the afterdeck and watched with fascination as the phosphorescent-

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

crested waves charged out of the night upon our wallowing craft. When one would break over her bow, the decks would appear to run with liquid fire. It was a beautiful but frightening sight. Somehow, in all that turmoil, Tani managed to brew a pot of coffee, and it made us forget how wet and miserable we were.

Four depressed mariners greeted a gray dawn breaking over a sullen ocean. I searched the close horizon for some sign of land, but the lighthouse of the previous night might have been a phantom one, for there was no sign of it that morning. If it had been Danjo Gunto light, as I thought, then a low rocky islet, Torii Shima, lay in the direct path of our drift. I could only hope that the waves would calm down so we might get under sail before the rocks loomed up astern.

A breakfast of scrambled eggs, hardtack, and steaming mugs of coffee cheered and warmed us. After eating, we coiled the tangled ropes, bailed out the bilge, and tried to get things ship-shape. Our spare provisions, the chickens we had stowed in a large basket under the stern deck, had fared as badly as we had, being wet and bedraggled.

The morning hours passed slowly while I kept a sharp lookout for the rocks. Suddenly someone shouted, "A ship!"

We watched a flat, beamy craft approach, now high on the crest of a wave, now out of sight in the trough. She apparently was a Japanese deep-sea fishing boat and her crew must have been startled at the sight of a Chinese junk, for they promptly veered off and made a wide circle around us. We yelled and waved, and Nick even grabbed a piece of rope and held it up to let them know we wanted a tow. They gave no sign of recognition, and we were ready to give up hope when she swung close along our port side and one of her crew threw us a heaving line. Vic caught it and quickly made it fast to our hawser, while Nick and I began heaving in on the sea anchor. This clumsy affair made such a terrific drag in the water we were barely able to get it aboard. Vic had made the end of the hawser fast to a small bit set in the bow. The fishermen started off, the hawser tightened, and then, with one explosive crack, the bit flew over the side. We were able to retrieve the end of the hawser and this time tied it around the mast. I was standing well forward in the bow waiting



THE LEE RAIL UNDER. " 'Shakedown cruise,' I had said. We were being shaken down all right, night and day."



"WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE . . ." Junk sailing proved to be something none of the *Hummel Hummel's* crew had bargained for. "We were groggy, wet, miserable."





## PORTS OF MYSTERY

to wrap chaffing gear around the hawser when the fishing boat took up the slack in the line. Nick shouted a warning, but it was too late. A heavy sea threw the junk off, causing the hawser, now tense as an iron rod, to slide to one side, pinning my legs against the bulwark. For a moment the pressure was terrific and I expected to hear the bones crack, but fortunately the hawser slackened and I fell back into the hands of my shipmates. A bad rope burn was all I suffered, but I shuddered to think of the complications if my leg had been broken at that juncture of our voyage. You just have to be lucky sometimes, that's all there is to it.

Trying to keep in line with the craft ahead was no easy task in that rough sea. Nick and I took turns at the tiller in short stretches, for it was wearying work. We were towed all that afternoon and had not the faintest idea who our rescuers were or where they were taking us. They had said not a word to us, and all our shouted questions were answered by broad grins. As the day wore on, the sea calmed down somewhat, but cold rain squalls kept passing over and kept us nicely soaked. At last a heavily wooded mountain loomed through the rain. When the horizon momentarily cleared, I looked for other land but, seeing none, judged we were approaching an island. The fishermen changed their course to round the northern end. My charts proved of little value as there are a number of islands off the western coast of Japan, and I was not sure of my exact position.

After nightfall, the fishermen headed their craft into shore. We passed through a narrow channel and entered a small bay. The fishermen cast off our hawser, and when we had drifted closer to shore, we dropped our anchor. For a moment none of us could comprehend the peaceful, quiet setting in which we so suddenly found ourselves. Tani and I stood on deck drinking in the beauty of the scene: the still water, the indistinct shapes of the high, surrounding hills; the small boats moored in an orderly row; the warm, friendly sight of the lighted houses along the shore; and the muffled sound of voices floating over the water. What a relief to have the junk once again on an even keel and to be able to walk around without hanging on. Yet just outside was the fury of the open sea, with the wind, the rain and the white-crested,

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

charging waves. After what had seemed to us ages in a world of noise and violent motion, we were transported to "Snug Harbor," a sailor's heaven.

Our reverie was interrupted when we were boarded by our rescuers. There were six of them, and they brought along a huge bowl of sliced raw fish mixed with soy sauce, a large wooden bucket of hot rice, and a gallon bottle of sake. We managed to crowd everyone into the cabin, and, by the light of the kerosene lamps, we were able to get a look at one another. They were Japanese of a mixed age group and all looked sturdy and well nourished, although I found out later that their usual diet was raw fish, rice, salt cabbage and sake. Tani acted as interpreter for the dozens of questions which were exchanged. As we junk sailors were hungry, we accepted their invitation to join them and helped ourselves to the raw fish, rice and sake. I learned that we were in Tama-no-ura, a fishing village on Fukaye Island of the Gotto Retto group that lie some eighty miles off Nagasaki. We were about four hundred miles north of where we should have been, but that was not only because of poor navigating—headwinds and currents were also to blame. The life of these fishermen was a hard one. They spent twenty days out on the fishing grounds, fishing and icing their catch, before returning to port for three or four days to unload. Then they went back to sea again. The frozen fish were later shipped to Nagasaki.

The next morning a little man in a white uniform, wearing a short sword, climbed aboard the junk to examine our passports and other papers. After a solemn study of these items, he informed me that we were in a closed port and could not leave until given permission to do so. Then he rowed ashore but returned immediately with two other policemen, apparently of higher rank. We were asked a number of questions regarding the reason for our voyage. They then inspected my charts, my cameras, rifle and revolver. They wanted to know how much money I had and if I intended to buy provisions in port. The answer to each question was written down in a little book which each man carried. Throughout the interview they were extremely polite about everything, but repeated what the first man had said, we were not to leave the port until two special investigators who were coming from Nagasaki had interviewed us.

## PORTS OF MYSTERY

Tani and I went ashore to see what supplies we could buy. Apparently many of these island people had never seen foreigners and their curiosity was amazing. Dozens of wide-eyed children followed us everywhere, my height and Tani's high-heeled shoes attracting most attention. The village was very small but clean, and the people appeared healthy and strong. The one-story, unpainted wooden houses in which the fisher folk lived, and the few shops, were built along the curve of the bay. The shops were so interesting that we spread our purchases among a number of places to combine business with sightseeing. We bought a large fish, cucumbers, cabbages, apples and some little cakes stuffed with sweetened soybean paste. I didn't have any Japanese money when I landed but soon found a man who was willing to cash a ten-dollar traveler's check for me.

When we boarded the junk later with our supplies, we found Nick and Vic arguing with a slight, bespectacled young man. They were speaking in Russian and broken English while the other fellow was speaking Japanese. Each Russian held a small flat can in his hand. The stranger immediately held out a tin to each of us.

"This fella crazy, I think," Nick grumbled.

"Yah, Mr. Petersen," Vic added, "for vot are dese little cans?"

Tani soon found out what it was all about and when she told me I could hardly keep a straight face. It appeared that the earnest young man was the port doctor, or at least he was trying to become one, and he had come to collect fecal specimens. No one had asked for health papers before, and no one had inquired about our health until this chap suddenly decided he had a duty to perform. I explained the situation to the Russians. They looked startled, and Vic asked, "Vot, in dis little can, Mr. Petersen?" After a small inspection tour of his own, the doctor left, saying he would return the next day.

Early the following morning, he and the police came aboard. This time the doctor wished to check over our food supplies and the general sanitation of the junk. The police went over everything with him, so it amounted to another search. When he was finished with his investigation, he asked for the little cans, which we presented to him. Nick and Vic stared at him dubiously. The police then informed us that we were to go ashore with them as

the special investigators had arrived. It was not until then that I noticed a small coastal steamer lying at anchor across the bay.

Tani was questioned the longest, spending most of the day in a stuffy little room at police headquarters while the Russians and I waited outside on the roadway. A group of small boys gathered, sizing us up. These children were healthy, robust and alert. At long last, Tani came out and it was my turn. After an hour of questioning, I was through and the two Russians went in. They were not questioned more than a few minutes. The two interrogators could speak English very well. Checking with each other afterward, we found that each had been questioned along the same line. We had to give a minute story of our lives and it was all written down, word for word. When the police had finished late that evening, they had a great file of reports and we were all, both officials and ourselves, exhausted by the ordeal. They could not understand why we were sailing on a junk, where I received my money, or how we happened to land where we did. Our answers did not satisfy them, I could see that. They even made a copy of my sailing chart and courses. A few of the townspeople came up to express sympathy but added that the strict investigation was necessary due to the war in China.

The following morning the two Nagasaki officials and three policemen boarded the junk. The questioning was repeated. They had another look at my guns and they also wanted to see our collection of pictures. They copied my medical license and our marriage certificate. When they finally left, I could see they were still puzzled about my sailing a junk.

The bamboo foremast had developed a bad crack during the storm and we had to have another one. Pine was the only wood available at Tama-no-ura but I was afraid such a mast would be too heavy. A pleasant young fellow, who had charge of the local ship chandlery, took me over to a small shipyard situated at one end of the village to look over some poles. On the way I had an opportunity to admire once again the beauty of the island. The heavily wooded hills surrounding the crystal clear waters of the bay, with the quaint village nestled along the water's edge, gave a quiet restfulness to the scene. These islands guarded important

## PORTS OF MYSTERY

Nagasaki, and because they were closed to the outside world, must have had something of greater importance than a fishing village and beautiful scenery, I thought; but I had no opportunity to go exploring beyond the boatyard and, after I had picked out a slender but strong pine pole, we went back to the junk.

That evening we had some visitors who were not of the police: a Mr. Sakai, one of the influential men of the island, and his wife and daughter and a brother-in-law. We crowded into our dimly lit cabin and opened some of the bottles of beer Sakai had brought with him. Tani had to play the role of interpreter for our visitors, who could not speak much English. Sakai, we learned, belonged to one of the oldest families on the island, in fact his people had been among the original inhabitants. His grandmother, he said, spoke a dialect not understood by the average Japanese. He proved to be a very interesting fellow and we spent the evening asking questions back and forth. To my question: "In this changing world would Japan's government swing more to the right or to the left?" he answered, "Japan could never go right or left because of the Japanese nature and their regard for the Emperor." He admitted that the Japanese Emperor-philosophy was based not on reason but purely on the Japanese nature. "No one man," he continued, "would rise in Japan to take complete control of the government."

The officials from Nagasaki left on the steamer early next morning and took with them, I presume, the volume on "T'af-faire Petersen." Shortly thereafter, the police informed me that I could leave any time I wished, so we made immediate preparations for our departure. We bought a few pounds of potatoes, more rice, some cabbages, and filled all our water containers. At seven on the morning of May 12 we hauled up our anchor and, with the aid of the *yulah* or long sweep, we sculled the junk through a shallow passage to the open sea. Farewell, Tama-no-ura!

All that day we had fine weather with a good breeze, and Gotto Retto Islands soon faded from view. Late the next afternoon, we were abeam of Koshiki Retto, a heavily wooded, steep-sided island with a rocky patch running off its southern tip. A strong southeast wind had whipped up a short steep sea and, as the junk

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

labored to get by the rocks, the waves caught her on the beam and rolled her heavily. But by nightfall we had gained a safe distance past the rocks and could see dim lights on the mainland of Kyushu. Vic and Nick were on watch in the bow, for I was not sure of the rocks in the channel between Koshiki Retto and the mainland. Wind, cold rain, and waves beat the *Hummel Hummel* all that night, the following day and part of the next night. We fought for every mile against the elements that seemed determined we should not reach a quiet anchorage on the mainland. Our progress was pitifully slow. When at last the wind dropped and shifted to a more favorable direction, I was able to sail close to the shore of Kyushu and there, finding a quiet cove, dropped anchor. It was about three o'clock in the morning and all hands went below for some much-needed sleep.

About daylight, a pounding on the side of the junk awakened me. I got out on deck about the same time that a stocky man in a white uniform climbed aboard. I thought I was dreaming, for I came face to face with a police officer looking very much like the one in Tama-no-ura. Three men manned a rowboat along side. In broken English the policeman informed me that we were anchored in the closed port of Ichiki on the island of Kyushu. We would have to accompany him to the police station. I was not going ashore without breakfast, so he and his companions waited patiently until we had eaten. Leaving Nick and Vic to watch the junk, Tani and I stepped into the rowboat. On the way in I had my first opportunity to observe our surroundings. We had anchored off a broad beach that formed a long, graceful curve ending in a rocky promontory far to the south. The town of Ichiki could not be seen, being hidden by high sand dunes along the beach. The boatmen did not go through the surf but entered a shallow stream that flowed into the bay. A short distance up this river, they beached the boat and we followed the policeman through the sand hills to a single-plank foot-bridge that led over a broad marsh. Ichiki was a poor village with primitive dwellings and was not as clean as Tama-no-ura. Women and children stared dully at us from their grass-thatched dwellings as we walked along a dirt road through the town. It was about eleven when we arrived at the police station and were ushered into a large room.

## PORTS OF MYSTERY

We did not leave that room again until eight o'clock that night. We sat there answering innumerable questions asked us by different men who kept popping in and out all day. Among other things I heard the familiar, "You cannot leave until given permission to do so." They allowed us to send out for some food at noon and they served us tea in the afternoon. The boatmen rowed us back to the junk and we related all our experiences to the Russians. They were for pulling up anchor and sailing away, but I thought it would only bring more trouble for us.

The next morning a group of some ten police and civilians arrived in three boats to tow the junk into the shallow stream. They explained that our present anchorage was unsafe if the wind should shift. But I suspected they were making sure we would not sail away suddenly. In our new anchorage the junk rested on the bottom when the tide was out and at high tide there was barely enough water to float her over the bar. It would have been impossible to leave without help.

Rain started falling in the early afternoon and, as there was nothing to do, we sat in the cabin awaiting developments. From where I was sitting I could look out over the rain-swept dunes. Suddenly a most unusual sight came in view and I called to the others.

In single file a group of men came plodding across the sand. Each held an umbrella to protect his gold braided cap and brass buttoned blue coat, but below the coat long woolen drawers and bare feet strode against the rain. It was with difficulty that the *Hummel Hummel* crew restrained from laughing as the little men solemnly climbed aboard carrying their neatly folded pants and shoes. They apologized for not wearing their pants but blamed the rain and proceeded to don this part of their attire when down in the cabin. They were an assortment of local police, Kagoshima police (Kagoshima is the capital of the province), customs men, and some who called themselves "Japanese G-men." Then began a period of questioning, and, when that was finished, they searched the junk. I sent the Russians along to watch the group who went forward. The others inspected the galley, cabin and stern. As I watched them, I wondered if they had any idea what they were looking for. They pawed over the magazines,

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

books, and old letters. One chap certainly could not read English for he stared a long while at a letter he held upside down. Another puzzled over the way a pair of my socks was folded and spent many minutes studying them and cautiously slipping his fingers into the folds. This fellow, a local policeman, had never worn socks and could not possibly imagine what they were. The excitement began when one of the men up forward stuck his head down the hatch and jabbered loudly. The leader of the party, one of the "G-men" who could speak English, looked at me. "This man says you have an engine."

I thought he was joking. An engine! I had wanted one, but I was sure wishing had not created one. "What do you mean, engine?" I laughed. "Where did he find it?"

We all scrambled forward in the rain to see the great discovery. "These fellas crazy, Mr. Petersen," Nick muttered. I thought so too when I saw what the policeman had dragged out of the chain locker: a broken cylinder head, part of the scrap iron I used for ballast. It took some time to explain that the rusty iron was not part of an engine I had dismantled to hide. When they finally left, just before exhausting my patience, they took with them my revolver and camera, but not my rifle.

A few days later we were interviewed by a high official from Kagoshima. When he had finished his questioning, he said we were free to depart. I decided to leave immediately, as we had been a week in Ichiki. The police returned my revolver and camera and towed us out to deep water. The *Hummel Hummel's* sails filled to a good breeze and I steered for a point called Noma-no-hanna.

At the rocky southern tip of Kyushu is Osumi Kaikyo or Van Diemen Strait. A few miles south, across the strait, lie a group of volcanic islands, one of which emits great clouds of smoke. The pilot book states that one should not attempt to navigate through Osumi Kaikyo at night nor during thick or heavy weather, because of strong currents and variable winds. The *Hummel Hummel* entered this strait at night in squally weather. We felt for the first time the effects of the strong Japan current as it moved the junk ahead rapidly.

A few hours after midnight, we were in a flat calm with a torrential rain beating down. Visibility was zero. All hands were on



## PORTS OF MYSTERY

deck listening for breakers, as I suspected we were close to shore. I steered south, but without wind we were at the mercy of the currents. Two tense hours passed. Suddenly the rain stopped and the skies cleared. Imagine our surprise at finding ourselves in a small, almost landlocked bay. Voices could be heard ashore where a few dim lights shone through the trees. Thoughts of another closed port and more tedious police questioning flashed through my mind. Momentarily I was at a loss to know what to do when, miraculously, an offshore wind sprang up. Minutes later, the junk was slipping quietly out of the bay. Fortunately we had not been discovered.

In spite of variable winds, the Japan current, flowing at two or three knots an hour, carried the junk along. I stayed as close inshore as possible, for this current has an offshore sweep. Fishing boats with disabled engines have been known to drift far out over the Pacific and the occupants have finally died of thirst. We sighted the high mountainous island of Shikoku, and then we were sailing along the coast of Honshu, the main island of Japan. A scenic panorama unfolded before our eyes daily. There were tempting bays and inlets, white beaches, green trees, and, in the background, heavily wooded, mysterious mountains. But we dared not anchor again. There were dozens of power-driven fishing boats around us every day, which served as an effective coast guard by reporting our position daily to the authorities. I never saw a Japanese naval vessel during our tour of the coast.

With good wind but squally weather, we sailed one night between Iro Saki lighthouse on the mainland and Mikimoto, a small island five miles to the south. The night was black and a heavy sea was running, but our chief worry that night was steamers, not the elements. Ships were passing through the channel in such numbers that there appeared to be a nautical parade in progress. We could not expect those great ships to see the junk with just a kerosene lantern slung over the stern, so we had to keep out of their way.

The next morning the weather cleared and I followed the coast into Sagami-ura instead of striking across to the entrance of Yokohama Bay. Strong south-flowing currents made me hesitate to take the risk of being carried away from my objective should the

## *HUMMEL HUMMEL*

wind fail. By twelve noon, we were abeam of Atamiki and I headed across to the entrance of Yokohama Bay. With the fair wind holding steady, the junk, white water curling back from her bow, rounded the two lighthouses at the entrance and we raced up the long narrow bay. At two in the morning, we dropped anchor outside of the Yokohama breakwater. We were thirty-three days out of Shanghai. Happy to have reached our destination, but too weary for any celebrating, we all turned in for some much-needed rest.

*CHAPTER III*



## *Out Where the Whales Play*

THE SUN HAD CLIMBED WELL UP IN THE SKY WHEN WE AWOKE some hours later. There was not a breath of air to fill our ragged sails, so we hauled up the anchor and, with the long sweep over the stern, commenced to scull toward the breakwater entrance. Slowly the battered, seaweed-draped *Hummel Hummel* moved around the breakwater and through the merchant fleet at anchor inside. Crews of the ships lined the rails to stare and wave at a craft they must have realized came from some distant port. We finally anchored off the sea wall, near what later proved to be the wharf of the water police, and official recognition came swiftly. In the first launch were customs men who presented me with a number of lengthy documents, among them a paper on which to list my ship's stores. This was easily filled out because the *Hummel Hummel's* stores were then down to zero. When the customs launch left, the port doctor arrived, and he finished his job in an intelligent and efficient manner. He was followed by the harbor police who came aboard in considerable strength. While some checked our passports and our personal papers, others examined our baggage and gear. Then, last but not least, came the secret police! These little men were a decidedly nosy bunch. They were

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

sure we were spies and they were out to prove it for the glory of the Emperor. Seated in the cabin with a group of them, Tani and I were questioned on why we had gone to China, how we made our living, and how much money we had in our possession at that moment, an embarrassing question, surely. Between periods of questioning, they searched the junk from bow to stern. They rummaged through suitcases and boxes, dug out bundles of old letters, address books and my log book. These last two items they kept. While this was going on, a Japanese employee of the American Express Company arrived on board with our long-awaited mail from home. When we finished reading our letters, one of our interrogators, an old man who spoke and read English, reached for them. He read them all gravely and at times an unfamiliar expression would puzzle him and he would ask me the meaning and would then nod solemnly and sigh, "Ah, so-o-o."

Their tactics finally made me angry. I slammed my passport on the table and shouted, "I'm an American citizen. I'm tired of all this monkey business. If I've committed some crime, arrest me; if not, let's get this foolishness over with. I won't say anything more until I've seen the American consul."

The old man was startled. "Ah, so-o-o-o," he breathed. "Not wise to get angry. Must say cannot land in a-ah Japan. Not sufficient funds."

"Send for the American consul," I said. "Unless I can go ashore I can't wire, and if I can't wire I can't get any money."

A tense silence settled over the group, but one of them left to notify the American consulate. A few minutes later, Mr. Johanson arrived alongside in a launch. I stepped aboard his boat to introduce myself and explain the situation. After hearing my story, he advised me to be patient, saying that the police had a regular routine to go through, and go through it they would, in spite of everything. He assured me however that he would arrange to have a cable sent to a friend in Los Angeles from whom I hoped to get sufficient funds to continue the voyage. With this detail settled, we were permitted to go ashore, but our movements were restricted to certain areas.

The secret police went through their routine all right—and thoroughly. When we were at the water police station reporting,

## *OUT WHERE THE WHALES PLAY*

which we had to do each time we stepped ashore, we would see a launch speed out to the junk with eager agents who continued the search. Tani and I were questioned on alternate days in the secret police headquarters building not far from the docks. These sessions started at ten in the morning and continued until late afternoon. On the first day I was shown into a room where my charts, log book and old letters lay on the table. Shortly afterwards, six Japanese, whom I suspected were military officers, although they were in civilian clothes, came in and sat down around the table. They studied me closely. The old man who spoke English and who had first visited the junk was again the interrogator. He started the first session off by asking if I understood Japanese, to which I replied in the negative. He then asked why I had gone to China, why was I sailing a junk, where did I get my money, how many brothers and sisters did I have, what did each one do for a living, who was the man I sent the cable to, what was his business, when was I married and where. Following some of my answers he conferred with the others in Japanese and would then thumb through the pages of a loosely bound volume to a page from which he read aloud. It didn't take me long to realize that this volume contained my previous answers to the questions that had been asked me at Tama-no-ura and Ichiki. They were double checking on all my answers! After a break at noon for tea, the charts were spread out and I had to give an account of every mile of the journey from Shanghai to Yokohama. The other men spoke up frequently during this part of the session and the old man would interpret their questions: What kind of weather did I experience here, pointing to a certain area on the chart? Why did I steer such and such a course there? I was interested particularly in their reaction to that part of my voyage along the coast. At certain points they wanted to know how far offshore I had been and what I could see ashore. My replies would give rise to a general discussion as they huddled over a book of maps that they were careful I did not see. The word "takusan" (meaning plenty or many) was mentioned repeatedly, and I began to get a general idea of the more heavily fortified areas along the Japanese coast.

After two weeks of this sort of questioning, they called it off and

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

we were allowed to go and come as we pleased. In checking with Tani, I learned that they had questioned her along much the same lines except for the navigation, of which she disclaimed any knowledge. Apparently, the secret police were not unduly concerned with the Russians, for they questioned them hardly at all.

A good many people in Yokohama, both Japanese and foreigners, were speculating on the length of time it would take us to cross the 5,000 miles of the Pacific. Estimates ran from three to six months. My plan was to sail across the North Pacific on what is known as the great circle sailing route. This would give me the advantage of the favorable Japan current and the prevailing winds. I did not intend touching any land until we reached California, and my guess as to sailing time was under ninety days. My search for all available information about the North Pacific led me to the weather stations and ships in the harbor. I called aboard the *President Cleveland* lying at dock nearby. Mr. Berrick, the navigating officer, came to my assistance with information on weather conditions, charts, and a *Pacific Coast Pilot* which I would need for the California coast. He took time off from his duties to visit the junk and, when he was aboard, he expressed the wish to be sailing with us. I tried to talk him into it, for I could have used a good navigator.

After funds had arrived from Los Angeles, the *Hummel Hummel* was hauled out in a shipyard to prepare her for the great voyage. The bottom seams were recaulked, the hull painted, and wooden water tanks built into every available space in the interior. Fresh water would be an important item on the long ocean trip. We left our oversized sampan at the yard, for it had proved too unwieldy to carry safely on deck on the voyage from China.

With major repair work done, the junk was launched and we started taking on stores. By sailing day, we could barely move around in the cabin. Tani likes to have things orderly, but I knew the cabin would not be straightened out until we had eaten our way through some of the food. The new water tanks took up a lot of space, but I was happy about the five hundred gallons of fresh water we were carrying. I knew we could last six months at least, as we were well stocked with food and water—



## OUT WHERE THE WHALES PLAY

even to three cases of eggs, though I did not know how well these would keep. The merchant had assured me he would pack them to keep at least three months, but, when they arrived aboard at the last minute, I found that they were packed only in rice husks. It was too late to do anything about changing the packing so we could only hope for the best. The Yokohama Water Company presented us with an exotic potted plant. This bit of green life, nursed tenderly by Tani, proved later on the crossing to be a restful sight to our sea-weary eyes.

On July 12, 1938, we set out on our great adventure. Quite a crowd gathered at the sea wall waving flags. And the junk, too, was bedecked with flags and pennants and, as we were towed slowly out of the harbor, the ships at anchor blew their whistles in a farewell salute. Everywhere there was gaiety except on the *Hummel Hummel*. We were a sober crew. We knew we were facing a big job.

I took my departure from a point of land called Nojima Saki and steered the junk out into the vast Pacific. I wanted to get away from the coast of Japan as soon as possible, for I remembered the warning of the chief of the secret police. He had called me to his office the day before we sailed and said grimly, "Do not land on Hokkaido, Dr. Petersen. If you do, the world may not hear of you again."

Once we got our sea legs and became accustomed to shipboard routine, the days flowed swiftly into weeks. The winds were variable both in strength and direction, and, as we sailed into higher latitudes, we pushed into a world of wet, chilling fog. What a forlorn scene the ocean presented in that ghostly mist! Waves, fog and one small ship. A little world separated from a larger world. Had it not been for the compass, north, south, east and west would have appeared the same to us, for sun and stars were not visible. We seemed destined to sail onward through an eternity of water and fog. But at the same time one thought of that far world of mankind. One remembered trees and sweet-scented flowers, mountain streams, hot sandy deserts, the gay, electrically lighted night life of the cities. And one remembered hot showers and well balanced meals. One thought of friends, wondering what they were doing at that precise moment; wondering also, rather

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

selfishly, whether they were thinking of you. The mind raced hither and yon as the mighty, mysterious ocean released forgotten memories. One also thought of the clang of streetcars, the sound of automobile horns, the hum of the multitude scurrying about its daily business. Then one gazed more fondly upon the mighty ocean and breathed deep of the fresh salt air.

Our limited water world did have a form of migratory life that hovered about for a time and then disappeared beyond the curtain of fog. There was the huge brown albatross, so awkward in rising off the water, yet so graceful and sure in flight. There were nervous birds the size of swallows that were in continuous flight, fluttering over the water, often touching it quickly but never settling to rest. They were so different from the powerful albatross I wondered how they existed in that stormy waste.

Porpoises came into our world in vast schools to frolic for a time. Of all earth's creatures they seem the happiest. Powerful swimmers, unexcelled, they are kings of the ocean. They dive, roll smoothly, and indulge in tremendous leaps, throwing their great bulk out of the water to dance on their tails in sheer joy of being porpoises. They are the sailors' friends and the terror of the sharks. There were sharks too, evil-eyed scavengers of the sea, who appeared silently and swam slowly around our ship.

One morning I scooped from the water a little black creature whose enormous head had a wide mouth edged with long needle-sharp teeth, a horny guard over each eye, and a phosphorescent appendage protruding from the forehead. The body was half the size of the head with a tiny fin on each side and a small tail fin. When I placed this small monster in alcohol to preserve it, the Russians solemnly said I had the devil in the bottle. It was evidently some deep-water species of fish that had died and floated to the surface.

Another time I sighted a strange object floating in the water ahead. I maneuvered the junk to one side and jabbed at it with the boat hook. I found I had fastened onto two huge glass globes that the Japanese fishermen use as floats on their nets. These were enmeshed in a mass of seaweed and mussels. Because of the weight, I could not haul them aboard and it was with difficulty that I released the hook.

## OUT WHERE THE WHALES PLAY

We saw many dolphins and were able to catch a few. This most colorful of fish is a strong, brave fighter when hooked. Vic landed a large one on deck that put up a terrific battle before we subdued him. With a swipe of his powerful tail, he knocked off one of the lights on the binnacle. Luckily, the binnacle protected the compass, else our navigation would have suffered.

Now and then one of us would see a seal. The first time it was a surprise to see a bewhiskered face with large eyes peering intently at us from the gray water. "What strange craft is this trespassing in our domain?" he seemed to say. But they were extremely cautious animals and would dive almost immediately we had sighted one.

For two days we sailed over an ocean covered with thousands of "Portuguese men-of-war," a species of jellyfish. And when the light was reflected from their tiny sails, the scene was not unlike a vast flower garden.

My navigation was improving. When the sun would shine, which it did at infrequent intervals, I took sights and figured out our latitude and longitude. When the sun did not shine, I computed our position by dead reckoning. The dots that showed our daily position on the chart traced a graceful curve across the Pacific. That was our course—I hoped. There was no one to check me; I was the captain. The most northerly point reached in our crossing, I estimated, was some three hundred miles south of the Aleutian Islands. Our progress was not speedy. Fifty-eight miles a day was our average during the eighteen days of July, and about fifty-two miles a day during August. It was near the end of August when I sealed a bottle with a slip of paper inside bearing the junk's name, our position, and my name and home address, and set it adrift. We were midway across the Pacific at the time. A year later I received a letter from a young boy in Oregon who said he had just found the bottle washed up on the beach.

After a month and a half at sea, Tani had a difficult job thinking up menus. Six potatoes, one dozen onions and a few cloves of garlic were all that remained of the fresh food supply. There were still plenty of staples and a small assortment of canned goods. But we missed fresh foods and did not like to see the onions dis-

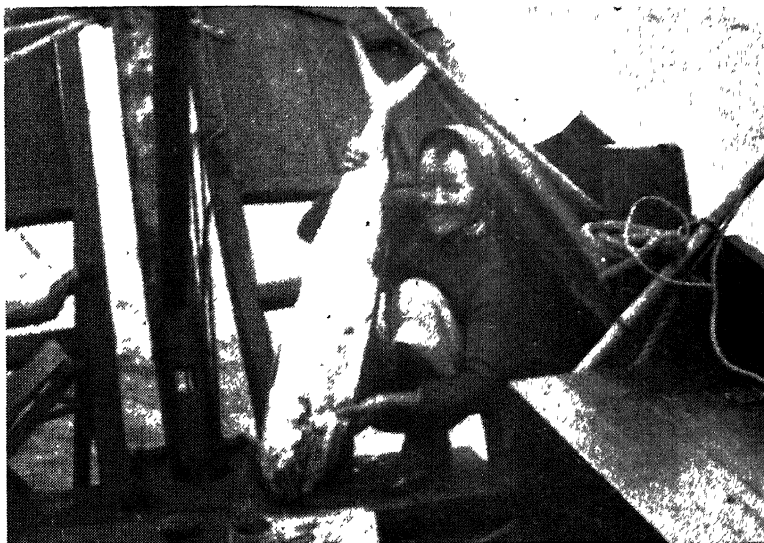
## HUMMEL HUMMEL

appear. Sliced with oil and vinegar they made an appetizing salad. With the scarcity of onions all hands took to eating a bit of garlic daily. This might have given Tani the idea for the dish she served us one day. Remember the three cases of eggs that came aboard in Yokohama? Eating our way through the first case was wonderful and we congratulated ourselves on having such a good supply. Halfway through the second case, we were not so sure, for we began to smell something wrong. The eggs got stronger and stronger and were difficult to eat. Tani saved the day and the rest of that case by serving them scrambled with garlic. The third case we couldn't salvage, it just blew up.

Tani was a great improviser in the galley. We had no bread, and there was no way to bake any, so she developed "fried crackers," which were great. They were simple to make: flour, water, baking powder and salt. The dough was rolled thin, cut into strips, and fried in fat until brown. This food also gave us the fat we lacked in our diet, as we had no butter. On one occasion Tani started out to make biscuits but finished up by making a batch of doughnuts. They were delicious, and we made short work of them. Strange and wonderful concoctions came out of the galley. One time we were promised cookies, but something went wrong with the recipe, and they turned into candy and a custard-like pudding.

Part of our water supply was carried in a compartment in the bow, originally used for the chain locker. While in Yokohama, we had cleaned it out and coated the inside with cement. To get the water we had to dip in with a bucket and as the water level dropped it was necessary to reach down farther and farther. One day Vic went forward to get some water. The rest of us were on the afterdeck not paying any particular attention, but suddenly we heard faint cries from up forward. When Nick and I reached the source of these cries, we found Vic wedged into the hatch, his legs thrashing wildly in the air and his face within an inch of the water below. While dipping in his bucket a sudden lurch of the junk had pushed him in. We dragged him, red-faced, from his upside down position, out on deck.

"Vot you tink of dat," he gasped. "All de vater in de ocean and Vic almost drown on de boat."



THE MATE WITH A DOLPHIN. "This most colorful of fish is a strong, brave fighter. . . . With a swipe of his powerful tail, he knocked off one of the lights on the binnacle before we subdued him."





## OUT WHERE THE WHALES PLAY

Fifty-four days out of Yokohama a stirring event took place which instilled new hope in four sea-weary mariners. We knew that human life still existed in the world. We sighted a ship! I put up the American flag; Vic ran to the bow and waved an old shirt. We all shouted excitedly, although the ship was then only a speck on the horizon. Anxiously we watched her through binoculars, passing them from one to the other so that each could see "our" ship more clearly. What a sight and what joy to see a ship upon that horizon which had not changed for so many days! All hands burst into wild cheering when she altered her course and headed toward us. Presently a huge oil tanker flying the Swedish flag was bearing down on us. I read her name, *Sveaborg*, and then a woman's voice hailed from the bridge, "Hello there, Dr. Petersen!"

I was speechless with surprise. Imagine being recognized in mid-Pacific, especially when I was hiding behind a full black beard. It was the voice of the captain's wife who was aboard with their two tow-headed children.

"Can you give me my position?" I shouted when at last I found my voice. The captain called out through a megaphone the latitude and longitude. I could not believe my ears and asked him to repeat it. It was no mistake; we were seven hundred miles closer to the United States than I had figured. What sweet words: seven hundred miles; almost a month's sailing for the junk! By this time the great bulk of the tanker towered over our battered ship. We took a line fore and aft while Vic held the junk off the steel sides with a boat hook. Faces peered down at us. I wanted to speak, to say so many things, but words would not come. It seemed enough just to gaze upon fellow humans again.

"We thought you were a fishing boat blown out to sea," the captain's wife called down. "The worst typhoon in thirty years has struck the Japanese coast and many fishing boats were lost. We finally recognized your junk, as we had heard about your voyage."

Realizing we must be short of food, the captain had the steward lower down two gunnysacks full of fresh food. It was with restraint that the *Hummel Hummel* crew kept from snatching at this food. The big ship could not tarry long and all too soon we

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

found ourselves shouting "good-by." The captain said he would report us via radio to San Francisco and Yokohama. When the ropes were cast off and before we had drifted apart, a bundle of newspapers hit our deck, followed by a carton of cigarettes, donations from the crew. The space between the *Sveaborg* and the *Hummel Hummel* widened rapidly. We stared silently after her until she disappeared over the horizon. Then suddenly we felt strangely alone. New faces, new voices, and people to talk to were gone. It might have been a dream were it not for the fine food spread out in the cabin. There were two legs of pork, fresh bread, packages of Swedish bread, oranges, lemons, grapefruit, cauliflower, cabbage, tomatoes, celery and lettuce. That night we had a feast.

Something had happened in our water tanks that caused the water to become the color of tea and made it develop a sour, nauseating taste. Fortunately, the water did not make any of us ill but the spoilage was depressing to our spirits. Then came the *Sveaborg* with the happy news that we were nearer home than I had figured and, with the fresh supplies, our spirits soared upward again. Even though our water was so unpalatable we still had to hoard it. We dared not be reckless with it, for there was no hope of collecting rain water.

Bathing became an ordeal as time went on. Tani and I would strip on the after deck about dawn and douse buckets of cold sea water over ourselves. You had to want to be clean to take baths like that. Nick and Vic were smarter, I guess. They didn't bother about such details.

I should mention that we were convoyed across the Pacific by whales, huge creatures that gave us more worry than the elements. With curiosity aroused by the silent black-hulled junk, they would come close to have a look. The largest ones were twice our length and cruised around us like a battleship around a rowboat. They circled and dove while we held our breath for fear one of them would come up underneath and capsize us. Once one of them rose out of the water like a submarine surfacing, so close to the junk I could have reached over and touched him had I so desired. His small eyes peered at us for a moment and then he submerged, leaving a wide slick. At times one would sound,



## OUT WHERE THE WHALES PLAY

throwing his enormous tail straight up in the air. With thoughts of Moby Dick in my mind, I wondered when one of these behemoths of the deep would charge the junk, or raise that tremendous tail to crush us to kindling wood. They worried us more at night, I believe, because we could only hear them. One would blow so close that the spray would sweep over the deck, and out of the night would come a wheezing roar as air was drawn into the great body. One can't appreciate a whale until one can reach over and pet him.

One morning while sailing in a heavy fog, Vic, who was at the tiller, called down to me, "Mr. Petersen, I tink I hear a cow!" I rushed up on deck wondering whose backyard we had sailed into. Then the fog lifted slightly and a cold chill ran down my spine. A surging line of breakers lay dead ahead!

"Hard over with the tiller, Vic!" I shouted.

Slowly the junk swung around and we headed offshore. If the fog had stayed down a short while longer, we might have been wrecked on that beach. It was our seventy-fourth day at sea. While we were discussing the situation, a small coastal steamer came silently out of a fog bank. She was the *West Planter* of San Francisco. As she steamed slowly by, I called out that we had just crossed the Pacific and I wanted to know where we were. Someone on the bridge called through a megaphone that we were off of Fort Bragg, about one hundred miles north of San Francisco. By this time the steamer had passed. Then, to our amazement, she swung around and came back. There was great activity on her bridge and on her decks. Captain Danskenen explained that at first he thought we were some moving picture craft and then he realized that this was the Chinese junk he had been hearing about. He explained the coastline more fully and gave me a course to steer. All hands now lined the freighter's rail to wave to us, and some were taking pictures of the "three bearded mariners and the pretty Oriental girl."

We sailed serenely southward along the coast of California with offshore breezes carrying to us the almost forgotten scent of trees and earth. With it came a sudden urge to walk barefooted upon dark soil and to gaze upon green mountains. There came a lazy Sunday morning when the junk drifted in an oily calm off

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

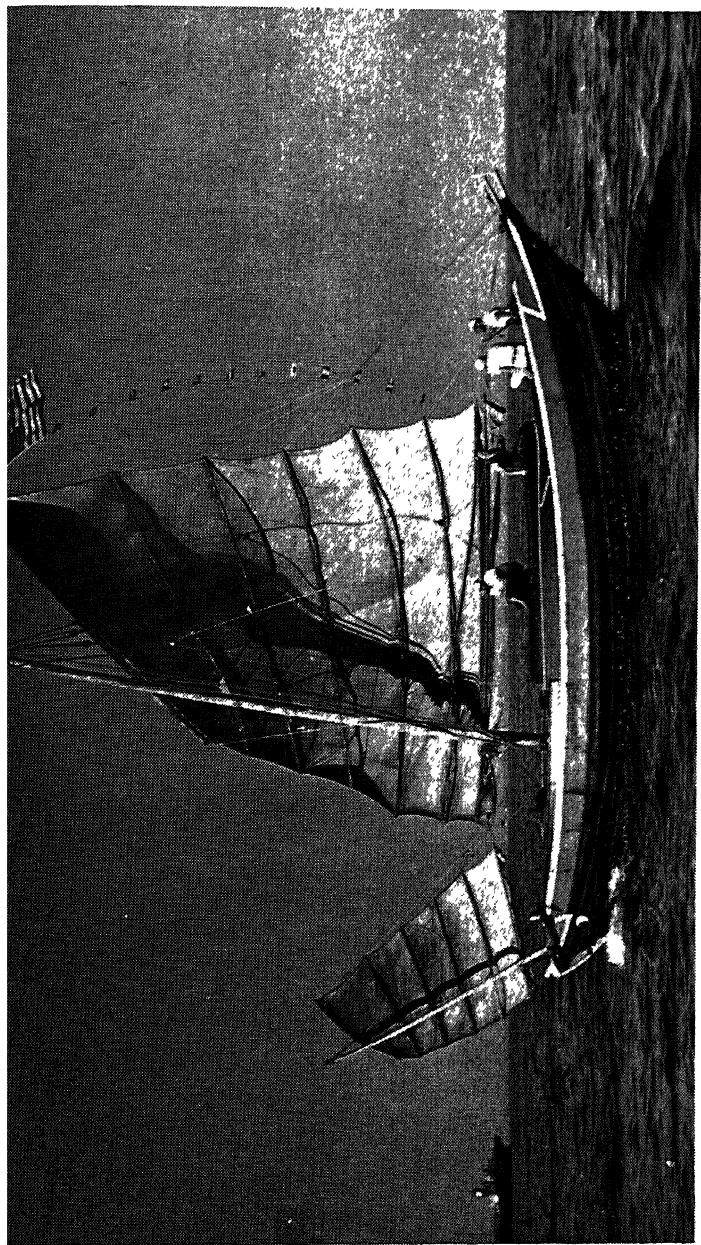
Santa Barbara, while a score of small craft circled around and waving people shouted greetings and said they had read about us in the papers. The schooner *Sachem* came by under power but stopped to send a dinghy over with a case of beer, canned chicken, cigars and chocolate bars. What a feast we had on these supplies you can easily imagine.

Late on that afternoon a fine west wind came up and we raced for Los Angeles harbor, forty miles away. Tani and I could not sleep that night. We sat out on deck gazing at the lights of the coastal cities. About midnight, the wind died and the junk rocked gently in a long easy swell. Presently we were conscious of a faint melody. "Why, it sounds like a Chinese flute and fiddle," Tani whispered, not wishing to break the spell that had come over us. "What could it be?"

"You remember what Amah told us about junks having spirits?" I answered. "And remember we heard Chinese voices protesting that first night out of China? Well, it's possible the spirits of the *Hummel Hummel*, angry when we were leaving land, are now happy we are approaching land again."

Before dawn a heavy fog rolled in from the ocean and we shivered in the dripping vapor that cut visibility to zero. There was still no breeze to speak of, and it was just as well, for I would not have been able to find my way into the harbor. Three foghorns were hooting out their warnings somewhere ahead, but I did not know one from the other. At mid-morning, the fog suddenly evaporated and there stretched before us were the rolling hills of Palos Verdes. What a sight for eyes long accustomed to a monotonous horizon! I saw Point Fermin and the San Pedro breakwater: our goal these many weary days. An oil tanker, the *Topila*, outbound, swung in our direction. "Congratulations!" her captain called from the bridge. "You are now within the city limits of Los Angeles."

Lightly urged by a faint breeze, the *Hummel Hummel* stole toward the breakwater entrance. At midday, a tiny launch came bobbing toward us, and I eagerly watched its laboring progress through my binoculars. All at once I recognized the figure clinging perilously on the cabin, our good friend, John Barcome. When the launch drew closer the *Hummel Hummel* crew broke



WE CROSS THE MIGHTY PACIFIC. The junk enters San Pedro Harbor after eighty-five days at sea. "A new American flag flew from the main gaff and a string of



## OUT WHERE THE WHALES PLAY

out in a wild cheer. Words flew back and forth. John said a great crowd of friends and relatives were waiting at the dock for us, and told me where we were to dock after passing quarantine. Shortly there came a flotilla of speedboats filled with news reporters and camera men. They shouted questions and wrote furiously in their notebooks, while cameras "shot" the crew and junk from all possible angles. We had dressed the ship for the occasion. A new American flag flew from the main gaff and a string of signal flags ran down to the deck. With a freshening breeze, the patched and weatherworn sails filled, and, with a "bone in her teeth," the *Hummel Hummel* raced for the breakwater entrance. Dozens of small craft were now weaving around the junk. Tani's family were in one boat, laughing and waving, plainly showing how happy and relieved they were that we had arrived. Newsreel men in fast launches circled us, grinding out this last spurt of a gallant little craft nearing the end of a long and hazardous voyage. By this time the *Hummel Hummel* crew was speechless with excitement. When we came to the breakwater entrance we met a sleek liner, outward bound for the Orient. What a contrast between the primitive weatherbeaten junk and that towering, throbbing modern steamer. From her bridge deck an officer unfurled a huge American flag while the rails were lined with the hundreds of passengers waving handkerchiefs. On we rushed and I set off the string of firecrackers I had bought in China for just this day. We were in Los Angeles harbor! Eighty-five long days were spent in crossing the mighty Pacific—days when we felt that we would never see land again. We could look back upon stormy weather, now we were sailing in bright sunlight in a safe harbor. It is difficult to describe one's emotions at a time like that. There is a surging beat of thoughts pounding like the ocean waves. But one thought kept uppermost in my mind: we had crossed the North Pacific in a thirty-six-foot junk. They called it suicide in Shanghai and Yokohama but we had proved that man can rise above the threat of death; that defeat can be turned into victory, if the will is there to go ahead. All the events of the past year and a half flashed through my mind. We had gained a lifetime of experience, it was true, but many a question remained unanswered. What fate had set our feet in the path of war and prepared the way for

## *HUMMEL HUMMEL*

the junk voyage? I had seen much killing and I wondered why mankind was so intent upon exterminating his own kind. My thoughts turned to the vast, barren North Pacific Ocean and its restless, never-ceasing motion. So it was thousands of years ago and so it will be thousands of years hence.

"Let go the anchor. We are home!"

## *CHAPTER* **IV**





## *Sea Fever*

TANI AND I HAD NOT DREAMED THAT OUR CROSSING OF THE PACIFIC in a Chinese junk, "a fishing sampan," as one of the newspapers put it, would create so much excitement. And this interest was not confined to the Pacific Coast, but spread all through the United States. News photographers, newsreel men, reporters, a continuously ringing telephone, with requests for speaking engagements, kept me on the jump for many days following our arrival.

I soon learned that a captain has as many if not more problems confronting him in port than upon the high seas. First there was trouble about my ship's papers. Then there was the problem of the two Russians. Before leaving Shanghai I had gone to the harbor master to find out just what papers I needed to sail. He stated that a non-commercial craft of my junk's tonnage did not require any papers. In Yokohama I informed the American consul that I was taking the Russians with me to California and asked him what papers were necessary. Somehow they slipped up on giving me the correct papers and I sailed away blissfully into a lot of trouble in San Pedro.

At one time there was \$11,000 in fines against the junk for

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

failure to have health clearance papers, crew manifest, customs declarations, and I forget what else. I had decided that Uncle Sam would be the next owner of the *Hummel Hummel*, for neither I nor my friends had that kind of money. However, after I had explained all the facts to them, the government canceled the fines.

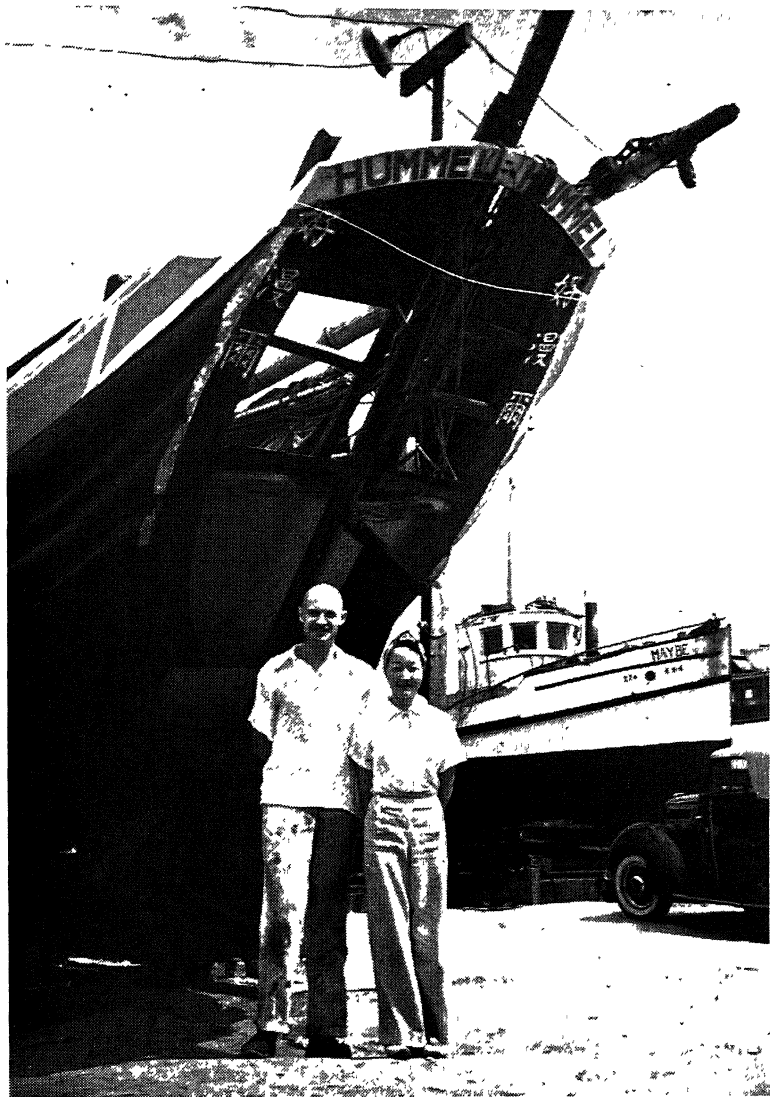
The matter wasn't so simple with the immigration authorities. They wanted to know what I meant by bringing stateless Russians to America, and what had I intended doing with them. When I said I had intended finding some jobs on ships for them, I was curtly told that they could not work in the United States. So after spending eighty-five days at sea, Nick and Vic were not allowed to step ashore.

People who went down to the harbor to see the junk saw also two forlorn Russians. The first thing I knew I began hearing rumors that I was to blame for all this. When I had bought their return tickets to Shanghai the authorities allowed them ashore for a few days in my care and I was told that if they escaped it would cost me one thousand dollars for each. When they eventually boarded the steamer which was to take them back to Shanghai, they seemed happy enough, for they'd had a chance to do a little sightseeing and to travel back in luxury with money in their pockets.

During those first months after our voyage from China, I was kept too busy to do much planning about our return trip. And we were not too anxious to leave, either, because the situation in China had worsened since we left there. But I knew now that we had crossed the Pacific once in our little junk and we could do it again.

After eight months, I had her hauled out at a small boatyard in San Pedro. She needed much work to make her shipshape. A few ship's carpenters, whom I had look her over, were not anxious to take on the job. Her peculiar construction baffled them and they all admitted that the job would cost me more than it was worth. The only thing left was to repair the junk ourselves.

The following weeks found us working at every possible spare moment. First I tore everything out of the interior; the water tanks, bunks, and an old icebox we used as a cupboard. It was a



FIRST STOP FOR REPAIRS. The owners at the *Hummel Hummel's* stern while she was being overhauled in San Pedro. "Ship's carpenters were not anxious to take on the job — her peculiar construction baffled them. The only thing left was to repair the junk ourselves. . . . After a few months,



## SEA FEVER

good job I did, too, for in the scraping process that followed we found many patches of dry rot. At first I tried to ignore these areas, hoping against hope that the spots were solid, but when my scraper pushed through the planking I could not ignore it. I dug and scraped and trimmed until the junk had a dozen "windows" in the hull. People would come along and look through these holes and make remarks like, "What are the holes for?" and "She's rotten. Can't do much with her now." I gritted my teeth and kept working. I had faith in my Chinese friend, even if others didn't.

Friendly, helpful people who were interested in small boats came by, too. I am indebted to one man for a tar preparation which he helped me make that enabled me to caulk the seams and batten up the holes successfully. I felt better when the seams were closed and the holes filled up. Then, when a coat of paint was applied over the hull, I felt really proud.

While working on my junk in that little boatyard in San Pedro, I met some unusual characters. "Portuguese Joe," for instance, was a mouselike little man who popped his head over the bulwarks one day and inquired softly, "Do you mind if I watch you?"

He never worked, he said. He just couldn't seem to stay on a job long. "Sometimes," he explained, "I think there is something wrong with my head; I don't seem real." He slept in a partly collapsed shack on the edge of the nearby mudflat. He ate when restaurants gave him handouts, but, he added ruefully, sometimes they made him wash dishes.

"Barracuda Red" was a different type. There was nothing meek about him. He was a bony, belligerent Liverpool Englishman. A beached sailor, who was dying of tuberculosis. I don't believe he ever bathed and he had a horrible ulcer eating away the side of his face. He and his women, for he had women, and not old ones either, used to drink themselves into a stupor in a houseboat stranded on the adjacent mudflat. Yachtsmen found it more profitable to give "Red" fifty cents now and then to buy his cheap wine than to find things missing from their boats.

"Big George" was a great, slouching hulk of a man with a sly grin on his round moon face. He usually wore a dirty felt hat

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

pulled down on his ears, and when he ambled by the junk he would give me a leering glance. One day he surprised me by stopping to talk.

"Da big fish'll get you if you go to sea in dat ting," he grinned at me. I asked him what he meant.

"I usta be a fisherman," he explained slowly, squinting his pig-like eyes, "but one day I saw a big fish, and I know dat big fish is gona eat me. I never go fishin' again!" His face twisted into its odd grin. For days after, his only words to me as he passed by the junk were, "You look out for dat big fish." Then one day he stopped again, and, pointing over to where a large Japanese whaling vessel was moored, he said, "See dat ship? See dat hole in stern? People tink dat for dragging in the whale." He leered at me and stepped closer.

"Big George know what dat hole for. Jap man back ship up to the beach and unload soldier, machine through dat hole. Big George know." He shuffled away mumbling to himself. Now upon looking back I wonder if "Big George" had stumbled upon the idea of the landing ship before they were put in use.

After a few months of hard work, the *Hummel Hummel* was in better shape than when I bought her. Tani and I began to grow restless ashore. Perhaps it was our working on the junk, or maybe yarning with sailors, that caused us to long to be at sea again. We began to study charts and to talk of faraway places. Southward we would go, where a Chinese junk had never sailed before, and then back across the Pacific to China.

With the route of the voyage settled, the next thing was to get the *Hummel Hummel* into the water. The morning of the launching, a small crowd gathered and a couple of news photographers were present. It was a trying moment for Tani and me when the junk slid slowly down the ways. She was so dried out I did not know what might happen. She hit the water and floated off the cradle. She floated! The main mast was dropped into place and a friendly launch owner towed us to a nearby yacht landing. By the time we arrived there, the junk was half submerged. The next morning, before I reached the anchorage, I had visions of the junk lying on the bottom, but, much to my relief, she wasn't any deeper in the water than on the previous day. I

## SEA FEVER

bailed her out and in two days the planks had soaked up tight and no more water came in. Our ship was now ready for the final touches, and a crew.

By this time the papers were again publishing details of our new voyage, some saying we were going to sail "round the Horn." The word soon spread that we were looking for companions. I felt that we could use another hand and I also wanted a photographer. There were a lot of men, old and young, couples and single women, who wanted to go along. Some had sea experience but many had not. Most of them thought only of the adventure and glory. I answered all letters and telegrams, trying to explain just what it meant to sail on a Chinese junk. I advised one and all to go to the harbor and have a good look at the *Hummel Hummel*. I've seen eager adventurers arrive at the landing, ready to leave at a moment's notice, but, after they had seen the junk, walked about the decks and stepped down below, I noticed how their enthusiasm faded. I know they had a mental picture of the junk in a wildly tossing sea. They could see themselves out there on an antiquated and helpless craft with no engine and no radio. They would step ashore again, rather subdued, and mumble something about letting me know later. Of course I never heard from these people again.

Through a friend, I met Parks, a man who wanted a change from merchant sailing. He had for a while been a submarine man in the United States Navy and the size and shape of the junk did not bother him. So, before we knew it, Parky moved aboard and fixed up the forecastle as it had never been fixed before.

Finding a photographer was a more difficult job. Expert cameramen told me not to bother about a photographer, that possibly I wouldn't get a good sea-going one anyway. A photographer friend in Hollywood loaned us a good camera and all the accessories, including dozens of rolls of films. He coached Tani on some of the finer points of photography and, in that way, she became the chief photographer of the expedition—combined with her many other duties aboard ship.

So many women, and men too, have asked Tani during our travels if she really liked sailing around in a junk. I've heard her answer this oft-repeated question, so I feel free to say that she has

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

enjoyed sailing as much as I have. I've never seen her depressed or downhearted. I've never heard her say she was sorry she had ever started sailing. She was on deck in all kinds of weather. The *Hummel Hummel* did not have the accommodations of a yacht, and Tani had to put up with many inconveniences, but she faced everything cheerfully. She could always see through the black clouds and knew the sun was shining somewhere beyond. She knew there would always be a rainbow to leeward.

It wasn't until about a week beforehand that I could set a definite sailing date. I had put off our departure a number of times, and some people were inclined to think that maybe we were not going to start at all. Problems kept cropping up that could not always be settled immediately, so the papers would run "Petersen's Junk Cruise Postponed Again." What a rush of work there is getting a small ship ready for a long voyage! When you are the busiest, there seems to be an increase in persons asking questions. I'm afraid that I was unduly curt to many a person during those hectic days.

But finally the junk was shipshape, the rigging tested and smooth-running, the original sails patched and ready to be hoisted to a fair wind. I didn't take any spare sails. In the chain locker we stowed spare chains, coils of new and used rope, and an enormous sea anchor. We stowed away cans of paint, nails, oakum, cotton, gasoline for the stove and kerosene for the lamps, fish hooks and lines, fish nets, harpoons, carpenter's tools, tar, pitch, cement, spare blocks and balls of spun yarn. As many lengths of bamboo as I could safely carry were lashed on deck for use as spare battens on the sails. I tried to take only essential articles that would make our little world self-sufficient. It is a job, I can tell you, but our Pacific crossing had taught us a lot. Some longshoremen friends helped me with the ballast problem. Scrap iron was rescued from some huge piles lying on nearby wharfs awaiting shipment to Japan. My friends thought it more suitable as ballast for the junk than for Japanese munitions. Two tons of this scrap were packed fore and aft in the bilges along the keel. Fresh water was still a problem. The wooden tanks installed for the Pacific crossing had not kept the water sweet, so I had to have new containers. Someone suggested wine barrels, which I also





THE CAPTAIN AT HIS CHART TABLE. "I had a good compass now, and a sextant. A Waltham eight-day clock served as my chronometer. I built a chart table in the cabin where I could plot my position."

SKIPPER WITH FIRST MATE. "Tani, because of her light weight and size, had to go to the top of the thirty-foot mast. All the time she was aloft my mind was prey to a hundred





## SEA FEVER

thought would be suitable, so I obtained one fifty-gallon barrel and some smaller ones to make a total of about one hundred and fifty gallons in all. The large barrel was lashed in the corner of the cabin and the kegs were lashed on deck. You can gather that by this time the junk was filling up, but we had not stowed away the food supplies yet. Among the staple goods we took were one hundred pounds of rice, the same of flour, the same of potatoes, fifty pounds each of dry onions and sugar, twenty pounds of salt, and about ten pounds of our old standby, garlic. The Los Angeles Adventurers' Club very thoughtfully gave us a food shower which resulted in the junk being stocked with a sizable supply of luxury goods, such as canned soups, milk, beans, sardines, corned beef, fruit, jam and a whole case of orange juice. Several friends sent down jars and tins of honey. Hams, slabs of bacon, crates of fresh fruits and a box of dates were gifts of other friends and relatives. More shelves had to be built to accommodate all this stock of groceries and the junk sank lower in the water. Tani systematically shellacked each can, as we had learned that canned goods should be thus treated to prevent rust, and also marked so that if labels came off we would get soup when we wanted it and not applesauce.

I had a good compass now, and a sextant. A Waltham eight-day clock served as my chronometer. I built a chart table in the cabin where I could work out and plot my position. My navigation books, pilot books, almanac, and a large bundle of charts were on a shelf at the head of the table, so everything was handy. This time at least I could navigate comfortably, if not more accurately. The junk was even fitted with running lights, which were something new for her. There were oilskins, sou'westers and sea boots for all hands. The only thing lacking was a dinghy, but I could not find a practical one small enough to lash on deck. The *H. H.* was equipped with two large sweeps which I thought would be more efficient than the unwieldy *yulah* to get us out of tight spots.



*CHAPTER* **V**



## *Southward Ho*

I DON'T SUPPOSE WE WILL EVER FORGET DECEMBER 3, 1939. IT was sailing day and it marked the beginning of a second series of unusual adventures for us. By mid-morning, friends began to arrive, bringing more gifts, among which was a large box tied with a huge red bow and marked "Do Not Open Till Xmas." And then there was Daisy, a little brown hen, who arrived in her own cage with a package of feed. The *Hummel Hummel* had by this time reached her storage capacity. There just wasn't room left to store another thing!

As I look back now, back along the months and years; along the trail of blue water, green islands and sandy beaches to that moment of departure, I can see and feel again the impressions of that moment—the tears and the laughter; the shouted "good luck"; and the friendly advice from friends we were not to see again for a number of years. The *Hummel Hummel* moved slowly away from the slip under tow and the three of us aboard turned to wave a last farewell to the group ashore. Some of our relatives and friends hired a water taxi and they kept pace with us as we moved down the channel. Presently, other small yachts joined us until we had quite a procession. Workmen standing on

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

the wharfs and sailors on ships waved and shouted, "Good luck!" Three deep-sea fishing boats, coming in with their catch, saluted us with whistle blasts. Before we had reached the breakwater, a dripping fog rolled in from the sea, forcing most of the escorting craft to turn back to the shelter of the inner harbor. We were about a mile beyond the breakwater when we dropped our tow. Parky and I hauled up the mainsail and foresail and the *Hummel Hummel*, heavily loaded, moved away from land slowly, cautiously, as though not too anxious to probe into the dripping atmosphere about her. Mr. Lindstrom on the *Marlin Spike*, which had towed us, waved good-by and headed back for the breakwater entrance. The water taxi circled us once in a wide sweep while once more we waved, threw kisses, and shouted farewells to those on board. Then she was gone, and we three on the junk were alone in the mysterious fog. For a long time we could hear the foghorns of the harbor entrance, insistently sounding their warning. Then a ship's horn somewhere off to starboard bawled forlornly like a lost calf. I put our foghorn to my lips and blew, to see how it worked, and startled myself when a raucous blast came out.

Thus began another voyage in the junk. This was not like the start from Shanghai; we could consider ourselves experienced junk sailors now. It was not like the start from Yokohama; then we were heading for home. Now we were deliberately sailing away from home. We were excited with thoughts of what lay ahead. We felt capable of overcoming all obstacles. But, like the voyagers of old, the thought uppermost in our minds was: "When shall we see our land again?"

I set the watches. Parky had the 12-6 and I the 6-12. The first night passed in that heavy fog, through which the junk moved like a ghost ship. We heard deep-throated foghorns from passing ships at intervals, but neither Parky nor I saw any lights. I don't think there is anything more mysterious and uncertain than sailing in a fog, particularly at night. Hot coffee from a thermos bottle did a lot to make the watches pass pleasantly. The next day we spent in a lazy fashion. It is surprising how the strain and tension of departure leaves you weary for days later. In about a week you pick up your sea legs, forget about land, and become



## SOUTHWARD HO

part of the heaving ship. At times during the second day out, the fog cleared momentarily. About noon I sighted the Los Coronados Islands so I knew we were moving southward—but slowly. I marked in the log among other things: "Sea water temp. 68 F.—Weather clearing." At 9:45 P.M. I sighted Point Banda light. The wind had shifted more to the north and continued to freshen. At 12 midnight, when Parky came on deck, Point Banda light was abeam. A strong northerly wind with a huge following sea drove the junk along at great speed, causing a broad phosphorescent tail astern. About this time we ran into a cross swell, maybe coming off the point, and the junk pitched, rolled, and shook violently. We took in some sail, which eased her motion. Before I went below, I helped Parky repair one of the small ropes on the main sheet.

To quote from the log for the next few days:

"Dec. 7th: Thursday—12 noon—by D. R. 96 miles. Temp 69 F.—S. W. Temp 64 F.—Weather clear. Wind fresh. Abeam of Cape Colneck at 6:00 P.M. yesterday evening. Parky caught six fish (skipjacks) today. We will feast. After sunset yesterday wind increased somewhat and built up a large following sea. At 10:00 A.M. we sighted San Geronimo Island. Our next light to pick up will be on San Bonito Island. Course S.S.E. Wind N.W. and fresh.

"Dec. 8th: Friday—12 noon—D. R. 110 miles. Temp 75 F.—S.W. temp 70 F.—Weather clear—Wind N.W. Strong N. W. wind and heavy seas from yesterday noon until this A.M. Broke nearly all the bamboo battens on the mainsail. Sailed with  $\frac{1}{4}$  sail up and no foresail and still we raced through the water. The heavy following sea gave the junk and ourselves a real workout or should I say shakedown. Impossible to sleep because of the pitching and rolling. Bailing once a day now. Picked up San Bonito light at 2 A.M. By daylight we were abeam of the island. After breakfast all hands turned to repairing the damage of last night. Wind and seas seem to be lessening. When the repairs were completed raised all sail and steered E.S.E.

"Dec. 10th: Sunday—12 noon—D. R. 96 miles. Temp

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

77 S. W. temp 72 F. Weather clear. Wind N. Still a following wind and sea. This is helping us move along. Five ships passed to seaward of us during the night. A fishing boat named the *Marguerita* nearly ran us down. Her helmsman must have been asleep. She just veered off in time. Parky and I expressed ourselves saltily. One week out today and we have covered about 540 miles. Averaging about 4 knots per hour.

"Dec. 12th: Tuesday noon—D.R. 70 miles. Temp 77 F.—S. W. temp 78 F. Weather clear and warm. Sea calm. Light variable winds from the northward. Passed Cape San Lorenzo and now steering E. S. E. for Cape San Lucas. Sighted a number of steamers including Matson Liner *Maui* which passed us close by and blew three blasts on her whistle. Junk leaking badly. Upon investigation found a stream of water pouring in through one of the seams in the stern. I patched it up as well as I could. Seemed to stop the leak. Will it hold?

"Dec. 14th: Thursday—12 noon—D. R. 50 miles. Temp 78 F.—S.W. temp 77 F. Weather overcast with occasional rain squalls. Wind northerly. Sea calm. Sighted Cape San Lucas light at 6:00 P.M. By noon today we have the cape 20 miles astern. Cape San Lucas is the extreme tip of Lower California. We now have an open water stretch across the entrance to the Gulf of Lower California of some 350 miles before we reach the coast of Mexico."

Well, I was glad to see Cape San Lucas astern, but I still felt uneasy about the weather. Local cyclones play around this vicinity during certain seasons of the year. I remembered that just a month before we left San Pedro a badly battered ship came limping into the harbor after a storm off this cape. I did not mind storms in midocean, but near land I preferred more pleasant weather. The day after we left the cape we had cloudy, squally weather with a strong northeast wind blowing. The day following, however, the wind shifted to the north and the weather cleared. I heaved a sigh of relief, for I felt we were getting away from the tricky atmospheric moods of the cape.

The weather for the first time since our departure became

## SOUTHWARD HO

warm enough for shorts. We were now in an area of great marine activity. Hundreds of porpoises leaped and danced on their tails in the warm sunshine. Deep sea turtles basked on the surface, but we found that they could move fast enough once we steered close to them. We wanted to add one to our larder but were unsuccessful. Turtle soup for the time being would have to come from a can. We trailed a hook baited with a piece of white cloth and caught all the fish we could use. Fine, chunky yellowfin tuna, bonita and Spanish mackerel all eagerly snapped at the tantalizing bit of white material.

Then, for some strange reason, we began catching only dolphins. Apparently all the other types of fish had disappeared. I believe the dolphin is the most beautiful and graceful of fish. When hooked he throws his three or four feet of slender iridescent body out of the water with savage fury. But for all his color and fight, the dolphin is poor eating. So when we hooked one we would throw it back, hoping to catch some other type of fish. After two days of this, I wearied and decided to have some fun. I tied a red ribbon around the tail of the next dolphin I caught before letting him go. I must have tagged fifteen or twenty of them that way when suddenly they quit biting. There weren't any to be seen, even swimming around the hook. A couple of days passed without a sign of a dolphin and I became puzzled. Then quite by accident I leaned over the side of the junk to search the water below and in surprise called out to my shipmates. I knew they would not have believed me. Swimming along contentedly under the junk were some twenty dolphins—each with a red ribbon around his tail.

About four on the morning of December 19, Parky was startled by the beam of a powerful searchlight sweeping over the junk. He called me but when I came on deck the searchlight snapped off. While we were wondering where the light had come from, out of the darkness astern a light blinked on and off. Someone was asking our name and destination. Parky knew enough of the Morse code to flash back via our flashlight the information. Daybreak revealed a sleek gray warship slowly overtaking us astern. She was the *U.S.S. Erie* and her deck rails were lined with sailors staring at the unbelievable sight of a Chinese junk off the coast of

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

Mexico. Officers on the bridge had their binoculars trained on us. There came a hail from the bridge.

"What ship is that and what's the captain's name?"

"Chinese junk, *Hummel Hummel*," I called back. "Sixteen days out of San Pedro, bound for Panama. Captain Petersen."

There appeared to be a conference on the bridge over this information. We must have looked quite strange and helpless. By now many of the crew members were photographing us.

There came another hail. "Where did you say you are bound?"

I repeated our destination.

Then they asked, "Do you need any help?"

"No, thank you," I called back.

After wishing us a merry Christmas, the *Erie* dropped astern. We could see her on the horizon most of the morning. Later that day the *Florence Luckenbach* swung off her course to pass close enough to exchange greetings.

A gannet flew clumsily aboard one morning, its feathers smeared with heavy oil. The creature was patient with us while we cleaned off the oil. Much to our surprise, when we released him, he returned to the junk after a short test flight. We immediately adopted him and named him Oscar Hummel. For the next few days Oscar was a faithful mascot, flying off now and then, evidently to fish, but always returning to his perch on the stern. Parky had hopes of training Oscar to catch fish for us, but maybe Oscar didn't like this idea, for one day he flew off and failed to return. Such an ungrateful bird; at least he could have laid an egg. Daisy had not produced so far, and we thought maybe Oscar could show her, but than I guess we were expecting too much from a bird called Oscar.

About this time we ran into a head wind for the first time, an easterly wind. It seemed strange to me that in sailing down the coast to Panama it was necessary to make a good deal of easting.

One of our tacks took us close inshore and the thought struck me that we should set foot upon this uninhabited and wild section of the Mexican coast. All hands agreed that here was an opportunity to do a little exploring. When I sighted a small cove with a fine white sand beach, I headed in. The entrance was very narrow and, once inside, I began to fear I had made a mistake,

## SOUTHWARD HO

for there was barely room to turn the junk around. Parky stood in the bow, heaving the lead, trying to find water shallow enough to anchor. We were getting dangerously close to the breakers when we found bottom at three fathoms. I brought the junk up into the wind and Parky dropped the anchor. When we had paid out enough chain, the junk was riding on the outer edge of breakers that were pounding the beach with more force than had been apparent from outside. We put over another anchor for safety. We were in a bad spot for a sailing vessel. If the anchors should drag just a little, our ship would be in the breakers. But I couldn't up anchor then and sail out, for the wind was against us. We would have to wait for an offshore breeze before we could attempt to maneuver out of this dangerous place.

We decided to make the best of a bad venture and explore the back country as we had planned. The countryside in general appeared dry, but the rising ground back of the beach and around the cove was thickly covered with trees and a dense underbrush. In a clear space back of the beach, we thought there might be a small lake, and we saw numerous birds flying about. As we made preparation to go ashore, we talked of wild turkeys and deer that probably could be raised from the underbrush.

We had no dinghy, so it would be a question of swimming ashore. Parky and I wrapped our revolvers in oiled silk and tied them at the back of our necks. With one end of a manila line looped over his shoulder, Parky slipped into the water and started for shore while I paid out on the line. All went well until he got into the sand-heavy breakers. He lost the line but managed to reach shore, minus one shoe. I coiled in the line, and then, looping one end over my shoulder, slipped into the water and started swimming while Tani paid out the line. The line created a tremendous drag once I reached the breakers, and it seemed I would be pulled under before I could touch bottom. Finally, I was close enough for Parky to wade out and help me haul the line in. We fastened it to a half-buried log on the beach, and I called to Tani to come ashore. I had instructed her to pull herself along on the line. It was not such a good idea, for the undertow dragged the line and Tani under when she reached the breakers. I pulled her ashore gasping for breath.

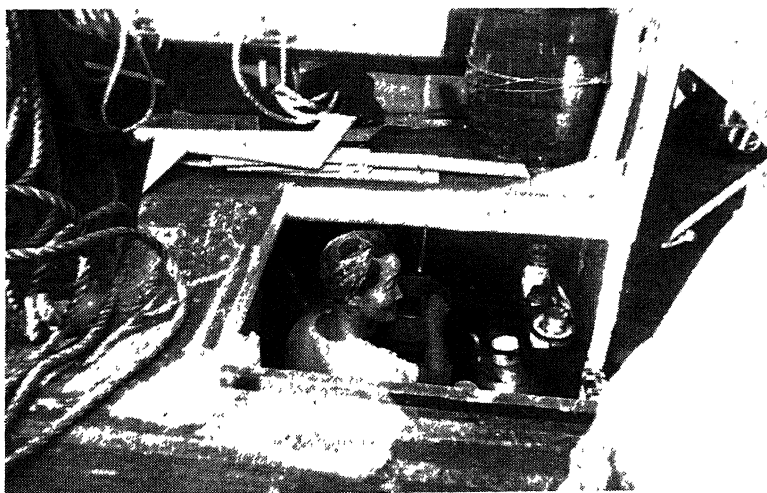
## HUMMEL HUMMEL

We were upon dry land again in Mexico. Parky and I unwrapped and belted on our revolvers. Surely shipwrecked mariners never looked more shipwrecked than we three dripping figures as we plodded up the beach. I paused to look back at our junk floating so close to the breaker line, and I fervently hoped the anchors would hold. We had our revolvers ready when we came up over the sand hill. Birds wheeled and screeched, disturbed by our presence, but the wild turkeys turned out to be vultures. The lake proved to be a large stagnant waterhole left in a dry riverbed. The revolvers went back in their holsters, and we laughed at Tani's remark about "shooting turkeys before you see them." We were further disillusioned when we discovered hoofprints in the mud that looked very familiar. Farther along we saw the owners of these prints, sleepy burros, thin goats and wild-looking pigs. Parky was all for shooting a pig, when a cow pushed her way out of the bush and stood staring vacantly at us. With such signs of domesticity about, we knew we had not landed on any wild, uninhabited beach. Then came the final blow to our dream of an unexplored land. Under a clump of trees were three Mexican women, washing clothes in a waterhole, while nearby a naked brown child hopped about like a small frog. I suggested to my shipmates that we should talk loudly so they would not think we were creeping up on them. As we approached, the women glanced once in our direction and then went on with their washing. We were more startled at this unconcern on their part than they were at seeing us. Even the child was not afraid. It was as though these people were used to seeing wet, bearded figures come up from the beach. Tani, our linguist, tried her Spanish on them and learned that there was a ranch house back up the riverbed. The conversation died shortly after it had started, when the women put their washing on their heads and waddled off, with the child following. Not one question had they asked about us.

Curious to see where these women were going, we followed. Half-starved mongrel dogs noisily greeted our approach to a camp of some six thatched huts and sheds. There was a small group of women and children sitting before the huts but we saw no men. These women showed no more interest in us than the



CHRISTMAS DINNER AT SEA. The *Hummel Hummel* menu included roast chicken à la junk, and a bottle of excellent white wine. "We ate our dinner on a wildly careening deck, with dishes and decorations sliding helter-skelter, but never was Christmas more enjoyed."



TANI'S GALLEY. In this tiny space, thanks to Tani's ingenuity,





## *SOUTHWARD HO*

others had and, at first, would not answer when Tani spoke to them. The blond hair and fair skin of some of the children amazed me.

We soon found that these people were extremely poor. They had little enough for themselves, let alone anything to sell us. When we tried to bargain for a pig, they did not seem to comprehend, not even when I held up some dollar bills and Parky chased after a likely-looking porker. Inside of a shed I saw a huge harp carefully covered with cloth. A picture came to my mind of days of fiestas when that great harp, with accordians and guitars, all carefully removed from their coverings, filled this barren valley with music.

When we got back to the beach, we found that the ship-to-shore line had parted company with the buried log. For some reason I thought we still needed the line and swam out to the junk. After retrieving the end, I brought it back to shore. Parky then swam out to the junk and, after he had crawled aboard, Tani took to the water and reached the junk without any trouble. I made a bundle of our gear, wrapped it securely in the oiled silk, and tied it onto the line for Parky to pull aboard. I took final leave of our first landing in Mexico and plunged into the surf. It wasn't until later, when we saw the fins of two enormous sharks cutting through the water, that we realized how foolhardy we had been.

At daybreak the following morning, with a fine offshore breeze blowing, we hauled up one anchor and heaved short on the other. Tani took the tiller as Parky hauled up the sails. When the junk swung around, I broke the anchor loose and we were under weigh. It had to be just like that; there wasn't any room to hesitate. Slowly the junk moved out to the open sea and we looked back at our anchorage which I called Tani Cove.

Early on Christmas morning, Daisy, the hen that would not lay an egg, departed from this world to do her part in making our dinner a festive one.

That day the junk rolled heavily in a flat calm three miles off the harbor entrance of Acapulco, while we sought shelter from a burning sun. There was not a breath of air and Parky voiced the wish that someone would come out to offer us a bottle of cool

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

beer on this special day. It was a tantalizing experience to be helplessly drifting right outside of a fine port.

The beautifully wrapped box the Barcomes had given us contained all the "makings" of a real Christmas dinner. The *Hummel Hummel* menu read: roast chicken à la junk, potatoes, boiled onions, cranberry sauce, a bottle of excellent white wine, plum pudding, hard sauce (chef's specialty), salted nuts, candies, coffee and cigars. Tani had set a lovely table on the afterdeck and, just as we were sitting down to eat, a fresh breeze sprang up. Almost immediately the peaceful scene of the morning changed and the *Hummel Hummel* was soon plunging through a choppy sea at about five knots. We ate our dinner on a wildly careening deck, with dishes and decorations sliding helter-skelter. Never was a Christmas dinner served under greater difficulty and never was a Christmas dinner more enjoyed. In spite of the rolling and pitching, and the roar of the waves, we did full justice to our food.

The wind went down with the sun and soft perfumed night enfolded the sea. We lolled on the afterdeck listening to a record of Madame Schumann-Heink singing *Silent Night*. The effect was wonderful, inspiring. We seemed far removed from the world, and yet my thoughts were of the world where there was so little peace and good will and so much hatred and greed. Tani and I will long remember that Christmas of 1939 off the coast of Mexico.

Along this section of the Mexican coast, the winds had a daily cycle that ran like this: calm in the morning; west to north (sea breeze) beginning about one P.M.; between 8:00 and 10:00 this shifts to an offshore breeze, hauling around to the east, which dies out about sunrise.

Early on the morning of December 28, Tani's birthday, we were abeam of Point Angeles Light at the entrance to the Gulf of Tehuantepec, the "Gulf of Bad Winds." I had been warned by a number of experienced seamen not to attempt to sail across the mouth of the gulf but to keep inside and hug the shore all the way around. It was a longer course, they pointed out, but would prove shorter if I should happen to strike a Tehuantepecer blowing. On occasion, vessels had been blown hundreds of miles sea-

## SOUTHWARD HO

ward when caught in one of these northerly gales that sweep through a narrow funnel on the isthmus and rush with unbelievable violence out across the gulf. I made up my mind that I would take the slower, longer way around rather than risk the very real danger of a Tehuantepecer.

We needed fresh water, and gasoline for the stove, so Salina Cruz, just eighty miles inside the gulf, would be an excellent port to visit.

With a stiff southerly wind astern, the *Hummel Hummel* raced into the gulf. The waters abounded in fish and we caught more frigate mackerel than we could use. We also caught a number of excellent-tasting sierra mackerel, a beautiful streamlined fish, with a mouth filled with wicked, needle-sharp teeth. Unfortunately we could consume only so much fish, try as we would. We had fish for breakfast, lunch and dinner; we had it fried, boiled, in salads, soups, and even raw. Parky was the champion fish eater, although I ran him a close second.

At midnight the fine south wind faded and died, leaving us rolling uncomfortably in a calm. About this time, the Salina Cruz Light started winking at us from the blackness beyond. Parky called me at four-thirty next morning when a head wind came up from the east. We tacked inshore and then offshore but could not make a decent course. It was in this early morning half-light that we sighted off our port bow what appeared to be a huge glistening iceberg. Daylight revealed it as a jutting hill of smooth, salt-white sand. If we could round this mock iceberg, we would have a straight run for Salina Cruz, but the easterly wind prevented us from doing so. By ten that morning, the wind shifted more to the north and increased in force, kicking up a nasty short sea. I did not like the looks of this and decided to find a sheltered anchorage. Putting the junk about, I sailed some twenty miles back along the coast without finding a place we could anchor with any degree of protection. Then, in the early afternoon, the northerly wind died away and within half an hour a good southerly was blowing us toward Salina Cruz once again. This sudden shifting of the wind did not allow for a similiar shifting of the waves. The *Hummel Hummel*, driven forward by the strong wind, plunged bow on into the charging waves. Then to make

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

things worse, the wind died completely at sunset, leaving us in a wildly confused sea. The junk was tossed about violently, causing the sails to jibe. We took in more sail and tightened everything down, but no one had any sleep that night.

At daybreak we started repairing the damage caused by the cross-sea. The mainsail was badly torn in several places, six bamboo battens were broken, and four of the small ropes in the mainsheet had parted. By mid-afternoon, we were once again approaching "iceberg point" when suddenly we found ourselves in the center of a most violent tide rip. Driven forward by the wind and pushed in all directions by the boiling swirl of water, the junk underwent more punishment. We shortened as much sail as we dared in an attempt to lessen the battering. The tide rip threw the bow from side to side so that the tiller had to be put hard over each time to counteract it. Huge tears started in the mainsail. With pistol-like reports, one bamboo batten after another cracked. The mainmast worked itself six inches out above deck. The motion was one of terrific violence, with the junk trying to travel in three directions at once. Parky and I worked desperately with the great sweep and finally reached sheltered water near shore where we anchored. All hands were thoroughly exhausted by this ordeal and we turned in by seven o'clock. We had not yet been hit by the famous Tehuantepec wind, but the gulf was living up to its bad reputation.

Daybreak found all hands set to repair the damage, which could not have been worse had we been in a storm. When things were shipshape we set sail. Now for the third time we came abeam of "old iceberg" and had a dead calm. We were close inshore and I could see the sandy bottom beneath us quite clearly. Luck was with us this time, for, after an hour's floating, we picked up a southerly breeze and scooted for Salina Cruz. Farther out I could see the spuming white crests of another tide rip forming, so I stayed close inshore. All that was visible ahead were rolling sand hills, and I wondered where Salina Cruz could be. Then, through my binoculars, I saw what appeared to be a man-made rocky breakwater. Upon closer approach, I was startled to see long black objects sticking up over the sand hills. They looked like anti-aircraft guns. The wind freshened and we were

## SOUTHWARD HO

soon racing for a narrow passage that magically appeared through the breakwater. Beyond were docks, long warehouses, and, towering high above all, the steel arms of huge cranes, the black objects I had sighted earlier. At six P.M., December 31, we dropped anchor in two fathoms, close to the beach in the outer harbor, twenty-eight days out of Los Angeles.

We had hardly furled our sails when three men in a canoe paddled alongside. In broken English one of them informed me that he was a customs guard. While we were receiving these visitors, an asthmatic launch bumped the junk on the other side. Leaving the customs guard and his friends, we hurried over to help aboard a corpulent man in a dirty white uniform.

"*Buenos tardes, Señores,*" he panted after straightening his gold-braided hat. "I am Lopez. I am the chief pilot here. How you come in?"

"Good evening," I replied, shaking his proffered hand. "I'm Dr. Petersen and this is Mr. Parks. We just sailed into your harbor."

"Ah, Señores," the fat man beamed, "difficult, difficult, you must have the pilot. I am chief pilot here for sixteen *años*. You have engine, yes?"

"No engine," I said. "We just sailed in."

"Ah, Señores. Well, Lopez, the chief pilot, is now aboard, but how you come in without me?"

"Well, you see, Señor Lopez," I said, "I am a Yangtse River pilot and that probably helped me get in here."

He was puzzled by this remark. "Sixteen *años* I am pilot here. Chief pilot." He said something in Spanish to the boatman and the launch chugged away. I invited Lopez down into the cabin where, with Tani's Spanish and the little English Lopez could understand, we tried to convey to him that we had come into Salina Cruz for water and supplies only. Chief Pilot Lopez just smiled and said he had to stay on board until the port doctor and chief of customs came out. About two hours passed, while we sat in the cabin and listened to Lopez tell us about his work, his fourteen, or was it sixteen, children, and his importance to the town. Finally, to our relief, the launch puffed alongside again and the doctor and customs men came below. I explained again

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

that our entry into their port was an emergency, that all we wanted was water and food, and that we did not intend staying long. There followed a long discussion among them and, finally, the pilot informed me that we could go ashore. He insisted we should do so because it was *fiesta de Año Nuevo*. A customs guard was left aboard, and the *Hummel Hummel* crew washed, and, in shore-going clothes, stepped into the chief pilot's launch.

Salina Cruz was a town that died while it was budding. Lying on the western shore of the narrowest part of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, it had hopes of being the main Pacific port for freight shipped via rail from the east coast. Many hundreds of miles and many days of sailing would be saved in this manner. But the Panama Canal was completed and the dream of Salina Cruz faded. The fine warehouses built on strong wharves wait for cargo that never comes, while huge steam cranes and miles of railroad tracks rust away. Pretentious stone buildings with sagging roofs and broken windows line unpaved streets, deep with sand. That was Salina Cruz as I saw it, and the people still had hopes that one day theirs would be a great port.

We went first to the Pedro Guasti, Salina Cruz's leading hotel, owned by one José Leon, a Chinese. The main entrance was through swinging doors into the dining room and bar. Beyond was an immense patio open to the sky with a long shallow basin which was, I supposed, in the rainy season a beautiful pool. Around this patio ran two tiers of rooms. We had a couple of glasses of wine which we enjoyed and then commenced a meal that was cold and unappetizing. Parky and I accused Tani of spoiling us with her excellent cooking.

Upon the urging of some of the townspeople, we attended a New Year's Eve dance. On our way to the hall, we passed groups of laughing señoritas holding high their silk evening gowns as their high-heeled slippers sank deep into the sand. Some of the more practical ones walked barefoot, carrying their slippers in their hands. We threaded our way through a crowd at the entrance to the building and started up the stairs where a number of soldiers were keeping all but the paying guests back. The hall on the second floor was packed with a colorful crowd and the air was heavy with perfume. A marimba band played vigorously

## SOUTHWARD HO

at one end of the hall. We junk sailors, used to the great silent spaces of the sea, were momentarily overcome. Finally we found some seats and settled down.

The Tehuantepec women have pleasant, alert faces and walk with a liquid grace. We were attracted by their gay, varicolored skirts, trimmed with delicate lace, and the enormous amount of gold coin jewelry they wore. "Doc," Parky whispered, "these gals are walking gold mines!" Seated along one wall were the duennas, matriarchal Tehuantepec women. On the floor beside each one stood a bottle of beer or a soft drink. They did not speak to one another, but, with hands folded in their laps, stolidly watched the dancers. I studied their haughty eagle-like faces with their keen black eyes, and I wondered what they were thinking. I imagined that these stern old ladies, with their broad bare feet protruding from under the lacy edges of their skirts, were dreaming back through the years, before the time of the white man with his strange dress and dances; back to the great days of the Tehuantepec people. For I could not help thinking about this contrast between representatives of an ancient people and modern, young Mexico, dancing to American popular songs.

The hands of the clock stood straight up and a New Year was ushered in. Showers of confetti descended over the hall and everyone was embracing and patting each other on the back, as is the Mexican custom. Before the dancing resumed, we pushed our way out of the laughing, happy crowd. Picking up one of the customs officials, we made our way along dark railway tracks to the boat landing, where we boarded our junk. It had been an over-full twenty-four hours. We sank gratefully upon our bunks and were soon sound asleep. The year 1940 lay ahead of us.

The next day we went ashore, hoping to get our supplies. But as it was a holiday, the port officials were not working. We learned also that every ship had to have an agent and supplies were to be purchased only through this agent. When I suggested that our total amount of supplies would be ridiculously small for an agent to handle, the men I spoke to just shrugged. The day was a holiday and they did not want to be bothered. *Mañana* would be time enough.

We spent the day looking around the town and meeting a few

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

people. Manuel Gomez, who was in charge of the All-America Cable Company's local office, was an interesting and friendly fellow. He was like an American consul in the port, for he had, on numerous occasions, assisted Americans in their difficulties with the officials. He had been with the cable company nearly twenty years and told me that he was expecting to retire next year. A sober, scholarly fellow, he had an amazing curiosity. For instance, he had taken his old Chevrolet automobile completely apart and was then engaged in putting it all together again—just to satisfy his curiosity as to how it was all done. In answer to my question as to why he had never married, he replied that after he had finished his work at the cable company he intended to travel and up to that point his plans did not allow for such frivolous things as sweethearts or a wife. He was saving all his money for the day when he would retire. It was a driving passion with him. He gave regularly to certain beggars on the streets, and most of the townspeople addressed him respectfully as Don Manuel.

We visited at the home of Ted Gardiner, a Scotsman married to a pretty young Tehuantepec girl whom he called Terry. Ted had come to Salina Cruz originally to be chief engineer on a dredging ship. As the glory of Salina Cruz faded, so had Ted's job. It seems there was some salary due him and he stayed on waiting for it. Now he was married, broke, and couldn't leave, but he pined for the hills of Scotland. He sought escape in alcohol, and when under its influence would sit at his old piano, playing and singing Scottish ballads while tears rolled down his face.

On Tuesday morning I appeared at the customs office and was presented with a lengthy itemized statement, which included pilot's fee, wages for customs guards, port doctor's fee, immigration officer's fee, port captain's fee, customs charge—and every one of these charges was doubled. This was due, I was told, to the fact that we had arrived on a Sunday and also because the next day was a holiday, for which all had to have overtime. "Ah, yes," the chief of customs said, "it is too bad that you arrived on a holiday. If it had not been a holiday, it would have cost you almost nothing. Too bad."

We had put into port for a few supplies and water only, and



## SOUTHWARD HO

every hungry official in the place expected to make a profit on us. I appealed to a Captain Somellera and to Manuel Gomez. The captain remarked that he was ashamed of the actions of some of his countrymen. He suggested that Señor Gomez go with us to interview the various officials concerned. This we did and Manuel rose magnificently to my defense; Spanish flew thick and fast. There proved to be jealousies among the various officials and one would criticize and expose the others. The doctor seemed to understand our case and made out our health papers without charge. The others were more stubborn. The port captain, a grouchy, dyspeptic-looking individual, called us pirates because we did not have papers for Salina Cruz. The size of our ship and the fact that we had come in for an emergency did not impress him. After visiting all the officials involved in our bill, we held another council of war. It was decided that we pay only those officials who actually made out papers or otherwise exerted themselves, ignore the others, and slip out of the harbor when we were ready.

I rented a canoe from a fisherman, and Parky and I filled a few of our water kegs. It was impossible to fill all of our barrels this way but I was sure we could stop farther along the coast for more water. We went to the *plaza*, the market place, to get supplies. Among other things we bought rice, eggs, flour and *totopos*, which were flat, plate-sized disks of baked maize flour, a good deal like *tortillas*, but thicker, and hard like a cracker. Gomez recommended these in place of bread, as they keep well. For sweets, we bought a number of cone-shaped blocks of *pinocchio*, a dark-brown raw sugar. All these goods were put aboard via the canoe without attracting any undue attention, and we managed to get three gallons of gasoline for the galley stove.

I planned on getting away the following morning. Some friends said they would see to it that the motor of the pilot's launch would conveniently stall and thereby prevent any pursuit, once I was under way. Some of the officials evidently suspected we were up to something, for a light was flashed on the junk from the nearby breakwater after dark. I could see the glow of cigarettes and heard voices where I presumed our watchers sat. We had no intention of leaving during the night, so we turned

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

in to enjoy a good sleep. "Let them keep watch through the night if they want," I thought.

I was up before dawn and found a light northerly breeze blowing, ideal to take us out through the breakwater. A little later, with better visibility, I could see a small group of men crouched among the rocks of the breakwater, our watchers of the night. The breeze was freshening. I awakened Parky and we heaved short on the anchor. The men ashore heard us and stood up, but they were not sure what we were doing. I could only hope none of them was armed, as I did not want a gun battle and an international incident. We moved like clockwork after that. A few quick pulls and the foresail was set. Tani stood by the tiller. Parky broke the anchor loose as I commenced hauling up the mainsail. The freshening breeze pushed against it and the *Hummel Hummel* leaned over. We were off to a flying start! The men on the breakwater were scrambling along the rocks to the beach, and when they reached it, they raced toward a small wharf where the launch was moored. Their shouts brought other men from nearby sheds and houses. The thought flashed through my mind: had our friends "fixed" the motor? The *Hummel Hummel* was streaking toward the breakwater entrance as though she realized what was happening. A few minutes more and we were through. I looked back. Our friends had not failed us. Around the launch clustered a group of wildly gesticulating ~~men~~.

*CHAPTER* **VI**



## *Vengeance of the Shark God*

"LOOKS LIKE WE MADE IT ALL RIGHT," A VOICE CALLED OUT FROM up forward. I swung around and for a moment could not believe my eyes. A man climbed out of the rope locker and came slowly aft. Only then did I recognize him as a young American I had met ashore. At first I did not know whether to be angry or to laugh at the idea of a stowaway on a junk! He had been in Salina Cruz too long, he explained, and wanted to know if I would give him a lift down to one of the Central American countries. Henry Weston's entire possessions, besides the clothes on his back, were a very good German camera and a few rolls of film. He had no passport but carried a Mexican tourist pass. Some might have been suspicious of an individual under these circumstances but, as long as I knew nothing against him, I decided to take him along and drop him off at the next port of call. He was to stand watch with Parky and make himself generally useful. We could not have just a passenger on the junk.

Light variable winds for the next few days made our progress very disappointing. We finally passed San Benito, the last port in Mexico, and then Champerico, Guatemala. As we moved southward the foliage changed to graceful coconut and banana

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

palms with now and then clusters of palm-thatched native dwellings which made an eye-pleasing panorama. Under a huge silver moon, the *Hummel Hummel* glided over a tranquil sea as all hands reclined on the afterdeck, listening dreamily to our phonograph.

One lazy afternoon, a school of small black whales churned the smooth water to white foam as they circled the junk. I had just finished rigging up a harpoon that morning and here was a challenge I could not ignore. With the end of the half-inch line made fast to a belaying pin and the rest of the line coiled in my left hand, I stood in the bow grasping the harpoon. No one needed to sing out, "Thar she blows"; whales were all around. One of the largest swept across the bow, surfacing as he passed. I drove my harpoon down with all my strength, never dreaming that I would penetrate that tough hide. It was a strike! The whale headed for the bottom with the line streaking out of my hand so fast it burned the skin off my fingers. When the line ran out to the end, the junk swung around and started to follow the whale—then the line broke. Although I was sorry to lose the harpooning gear, I could imagine us being dragged all over the ocean if the line had held. "Maybe you'd better keep to mackerel fishing," was Tani's sage remark as she applied burn ointment to my hand.

About sunset a few days later, I baited one of our largest hooks with a fish head. It was not over the side five minutes when something took it savagely. Darkness had fallen and I could not see what I had hooked, but I knew that whatever it was, it was putting up a fight. Out of the water it leaped, and landed back again with a splash and a phosphorescent glow. It rushed in an arc from port to starboard in tremendous plunges, bringing the line to a singing tautness. The creature looked like a long-tailed comet in its frantic sweeps back and forth. Finally its struggles became weaker and I was able to draw it in and spear it. To my surprise, I found that I had caught a blue shark about five feet in length. I secured it with a piece of line, removed the hook, and let the fish drag in the water astern, intending to use some of it later for bait.

The following morning I was startled by a commotion in the water astern. Another shark well over ten feet in length had just

## VENGEANCE OF THE SHARK GOD

nipped off half of the shark I had caught the night before. It had bitten through the first one as cleanly as if it had been done with a cleaver. Then this evil-eyed devil circled around and came back for the other half. I quickly hauled in the remains of the first shark, and the big fellow followed it right up, opening his great ugly mouth as though he expected me to fall in. He was the biggest thing any of us had seen in the water, with the exception of whales. I had on board an enormous iron shark hook, complete with a length of chain that I knew the big fellow could not break. I fastened the chain to some one-inch line, baited the hook with the two and a half feet of shark and tossed it over. No sooner had it touched the water than the monster swam up and grabbed it. I paid out the rope and all hands stood by, ready for anything that might happen. The shark started away, and, when the slack was taken up in the rope, it actually started towing the junk. Suddenly it dove, and we had an anxious moment as the junk listed heavily. The creature stayed down but a moment and then was back on the surface. At last it seemed to connect the junk with its irritation and made a rush for us. We braced ourselves for the shock. But instead of striking head on, it swerved gracefully and brought its powerful tail around to strike the side. The *Hummel Hummel* quivered. It was no love tap. I kept shortening the rope gradually by pulling in the slack and taking a turn around a belaying pin. At last I had the creature's massive head out of the water. The cavernous mouth, capable of devouring any one of us, was armed with row after row of long teeth. I wanted those powerful jaws for a specimen and, meaning to kill the shark instantly, I put four shots from a .45 revolver into its head. Then it set up such a terrific struggle that I felt sure that the side of the junk would cave in. I loosened the rope. The monster made a wild, desperate plunge under the junk. The *Hummel Hummel* listed over, farther and farther, as the shark fought to get away. Tani and Henry were thrown to the deck. Parky cried out, "Cut the rope, Doc, we're going over!" I slashed with my sheath knife. It was seconds before the rope parted and the junk bobbed up on an even keel.

"Whew!" gasped Tani as she got up. "That was a narrow escape. I still think a small boat should fish for small fish. I suppose if

you had caught that big fellow you would use him for bait!"

Relieved as I was that we were safe, I deeply regretted losing such a prize shark, to say nothing of my special shark hook. Pictures? Well, just try to take pictures at a time like that with no one knowing what might happen next. Henry, the stowaway, had taken one look at the shark's massive jaws and hastily turned away. He knew then why I had not let him go swimming over the side the previous day. It was proved conclusively to me on this occasion that a shark the size of this one could easily bite a human in half. I noticed also that these sharks came up suddenly from below and did not circle around with the dorsal fin showing above water, as is popularly supposed.

Now, those who wish to believe in the South Sea Islanders' superstition regarding sharks can connect the following chain of circumstances. They may be able to see how my killing of sharks had so angered the Shark God that he put a curse on us. For there followed days of calm when the decks were as hot as a stove top and the pitch bubbled in the seams. Fortunately, a south-flowing current moved the junk along in the right direction. In this manner we drifted by San José, Guatemala, where I had intended stopping for fresh water, as our supply had developed a sour sulphur taste. Parky and I brought out the two large sweeps and attempted to force the *H. H.* from her drifting ways. We sweated and the decks soaked up the dripping water, but the junk did not respond to our rowing. It was no use. Her bottom was foul and she would not move easily through the water, even under favorable conditions. Hopefully we gazed at San José, but no small boat put out to us, although we were close in and the ocean was like glass. Within a few days the current had taken the junk away from the vicinity. Then, for some perverse reason, we were swept close inshore, where I dropped anchor in four fathoms right on the breaker line. That night we maintained an anchor watch, as I had visions of what would happen if we dragged anchor. Mid-morning on the following day a favorable wind found us at last. We heaved short on the anchor chain and raised the foresail and mainsail. With sails filled, the junk swung around and the anchor was broken loose. That maneuver had to work with precision, for we could not lose a foot. The Shark God must have gnashed his rows of teeth at this.



## VENGEANCE OF THE SHARK GOD

The breeze stayed with us until one night we could see the lights of Acajutla, El Salvador. I also had intentions of sailing into this port, but that's as far as I got. The wind died out completely as though some one had shut it off, and the junk floated in quiet solitude. Slowly we drifted by the harbor entrance where a light winked a welcome in the darkness. We watched a small coastal steamer enter the harbor, and the rattle of her anchor chain running out came through the still air. This time we did not struggle; we let the current take us along. By daybreak, Acajutla was far astern. In the afternoon, a breeze picked us up and I navigated the junk safely by the Los Remedios Rocks, a sinister and forbidding shoal poking out from shore. Beyond the rocks, the wind left us and we floated through another velvet night.

Next afternoon a steadily freshening head wind that came up from the east seemed intent on blowing the junk away from land. I sailed as close to the wind as possible and managed to get to five fathoms of water where I dropped two anchors. By this time I was getting nervous, anchoring so close to the breakers. Ashore were a number of thatched huts, and soon a group of people gathered on the beach to wave and shout. With the setting of the sun, the blustering wind faded away. We spent another calm night, rocked gently by the swell. The people on the beach lit a number of small fires and sat around them, shouting and singing all night.

The following day, the strong, blustery east wind returned, so we remained at anchor, as I did not want to be forced offshore. We seemed to be attracting plenty of attention throughout the countryside, for a larger crowd gathered on the beach and, during the day, groups on horseback appeared. The east wind, unhappy over the fact that we could not be budged, continued to blow far into the night. Our anchors dug themselves into the sand and held, so toward morning the wind gave up the fight.

All hands were on deck early to see what the new day would bring. I felt a faint suspicion of a movement of air from the south which, if it grew into a breeze, would be favorable. We had a quick breakfast and were doing the dishes when there came the unmistakable sound of an airplane motor. A small orange-colored plane streaked out of the sky to swoop in low circles over the

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

junk and then disappeared up the coast. We were puzzled at this unusual episode, but, as the south wind was now strong enough, we got under sail. Very slowly the junk moved away from the beach while the crowd set up a great yelling. All was going well until I happened to look up the coast. Bearing down fast upon us, its sharp bow splitting and curling the water in two white rolls, was a launch. She was coming from the direction of Acajutla, and that fact, combined with the visit of the plane, indicated that something was wrong. I ran up our flag. When the launch came closer I received a shock. One of the four men aboard had a machine gun trained on us! With a smile I had to force, I shouted, "Hello there!" One is supposed to be nonchalant under such conditions.

"What is this ship, Señor? What do you do here?" the man behind the gun asked, and he wasn't smiling.

"I'm Dr. Petersen of Los Angeles, California," I replied, "and we are bound for Balboa."

The launch nosed closer and a dark young sailor caught hold of the side with a boat hook while another sailor stood at the controls. The man who had addressed me left his gun and turned to assist his companion, a stocky man in white uniform, aboard the junk. He was, I learned as we shook hands, Lt. Col. Tito Caboami, the commandant at Acajutla. He spoke very little English and the other acted as an interpreter. I soon had the whole story. Some person had reported a strange craft anchored off the beach. This news was conveyed to the Minister of War who had dispatched a military plane to reconnoiter. The pilot had verified the existence of a strange craft but could not identify her. The Minister of War had then ordered the El Salvadorian Navy to investigate; hence the commandant, the launch, and the machine gun. They were surprised to hear that the junk did not have an engine and they could understand then why I anchored in out-of-the-way places. I showed them my ship's papers and a few newspaper clippings, so that the commandant could write down the data for his report to the Minister of War. Lt. Col. Caboami proved to be a friendly man and invited us to visit Acajutla, even offering to tow us there. But we had a fair wind now and, being foolish enough to think it would last, I declined

## VENGEANCE OF THE SHARK GOD

his offer. Our visitors who had arrived with a machine gun pointed at us now left with smiles—and we sailed serenely down the coast.

The fair wind lasted until sundown and then left us drifting all night. For the next few days we had strong gusts of wind, usually from the direction in which we were trying to steer. Only at rare intervals was the wind favorable. In between these shifting winds, we spent our time drifting in flat calms or dropping anchor to keep from being blown offshore. In spite of all these handicaps, we moved slowly along the coast, helped mostly by a favorable current. We passed the Gulf of Fonseca, where the chocolate-colored water reminded me of the Yangtse River. Here we left El Salvador and sailed along the dry, parched coast of Nicaragua.

Barring our way, like an ominous finger pointing seaward, was dark Cape Desolado. About this time I caught a seven-foot hammerhead shark, which I suspect must have further angered the shark god, for we ran into trouble after that. A strange lull settled over the sea and the empty sails flapped uneasily. Then down from the high mountains in the back country came a blast of wind which drove the junk ahead with her lee rail under water. "Lower sail!" I bawled as I struggled with the tiller. From the cabin came sounds of breakage, mingled with Tani's cries of dismay as stores, yanked from their fastenings, crashed to the deck. Parky staggered over the slanting deck to release the main halyard. Just as suddenly as it had come, the wind passed and left us in a dead calm. But another violent gust struck before we could collect ourselves after the first surprise attack. The blasts became more frequent after that. Desperately I tried to work the junk inshore but with no success. The determined wind was stabbing us away from land, slowly and surely. At midnight all hands were standing by on the afterdeck. No one could sleep anyhow because of the pitching and rolling. The chill north wind shrieked through the stays and halyards as the junk, hove-to with only two bamboos of the mainsail up, tried to hold her way against the ever-increasing waves slapping her sides. With the passing hours, the fury of the storm mounted. Suddenly the fore-sail disappeared as though snatched away by some invisible hand. The junk swung off and a swirling wall of water swept over the

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

foredeck, taking with it the empty chicken coop. Struggling with the tiller, I managed to get the junk up to the wind again. Parky, with a rope tied around his waist, crawled forward to get the sea anchor ready.

Dawn came clear and cool but there was no mistaking the wind or the sea; they both meant business. Only a faint outline of land was now visible over the tossing waves. Tani tried to prepare some breakfast and, although it was next to impossible to keep a pot or pan on the stove, somehow she managed to give all hands some hot coffee. In all this excitement I hooked an eight-foot shark. My feud with the shark family was not to be interrupted by a storm. When I disposed of the coffee and the shark, I went forward to see what could be done with the foresail. The halyard block had carried away and repairs could not be made in a storm. A tear was developing in the bit of mainsail that was still up. I lowered this slightly to repair the ever widening rip, only to find it left the junk without enough sail. Waves crashed aboard and soon all hands were soaking wet. To keep her headed into the wind, I rigged up a staysail forward and a triangular bit of sail aft, which seemed to work. At least the seas no longer slapped over the bulwarks.

We kept under sail this way until sundown when the wind climbed to gale force. It was a peculiar wind, that blew in terrific gusts, with each more powerful than the one before. (Later I found that this wind is called a "howling Papagayo" and builds up tremendous waves that are felt a thousand miles to the south.) I was at the tiller with all hands huddled nearby when the forestaysail carried away to become a white snapping rag, trailing out to leeward. Before anyone could move, the mainsail exploded into flapping rags as a shrieking blast swept across the junk. Left without any sails forward, the junk was helpless against the onrushing waves that leaped in, roaring and foaming, for the kill. They hit her staunch sides, they leaped up, gleaming white in the night, to drop their liquid weight upon her decks. While Tani steadied the tiller, Parky and I crawled forward. Water cascaded over the foredeck and over us as we clawed about in the darkness for the sea anchor. We threw it over the bow and paid out fifteen fathoms of line. When we had wrapped

## VENGEANCE OF THE SHARK GOD

canvas around the line where it might chafe and had made everything secure, we crawled aft. I lashed the tiller amidships. Henry was slumped down on the deck, a wet, depressed mortal, and I imagine he was cursing the day he had stepped aboard the *Hummel Hummel*. I roused him to help Parky and me with the bailing while Tani made some coffee.

Our voyage nearly ended at three that morning. One second, a wall of water hung over the junk; the next instant it broke upon us with a thundering rumble. The junk shuddered from the impact and slid along on her beam ends while water poured over the decks and cascaded into the cabin. Gear stored on deck was swept over the side. Crystal-clear thoughts sped through my head. We're capsizing! Get Tani! Cling to the upturned hull! Miraculously, the junk bobbed back on even keel, but she could not survive another broadside like that one. Parky and I scrambled forward. As I suspected, the sea anchor had carried away and the junk was at the mercy of the sea. Slipping and sliding on a wet, wildly heaving deck, we dropped our heaviest anchor over the bow and let out twenty fathoms of line. Then I readjusted the trysail astern, and the junk once again headed into the onrushing mountains of water. Down in the cabin was a heartbreaking mess of broken dishes, books, charts and water sloshing back and forth. We rescued all the floating articles and then started bailing. The gasoline stove and the canned goods were bathed in salt water and would have to be dried carefully. The following day we lay around trying to relax. Cooking was out of the question, and it did not matter because the violent motion had deprived us of any appetite. Everything was soaking wet, blankets, bunks, clothing and most of our food supplies.

The wind continued its mournful howl and the white-crested waves charged relentlessly. As each watery peak approached, the junk would climb up and up—then down, down we would go until it seemed as if the waves would surely engulf us. But every time we returned to the moaning wind and to the cold stars. Parky and I rigged up an emergency sea anchor by filling a fifteen-gallon barrel with sea water and wrapping it in an old piece of heavy tarpaulin. This was securely lashed and then made fast to a length of spare anchor line. The barrel and canvas would

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

make an excellent drag, and I breathed more freely after it was ready.

The wind blew itself out in five days, although the sea did not moderate until some days later. Only then could we set to work clearing up the wreckage. The mainsail was in shreds, but after two days of steady sewing, using bedsheets to fill in missing sections, for I had no spare canvas, we were able to raise about one third of the original sail area. The same was done with the badly torn foresail, and part of it could be raised once more. When all this was done, we wearily hauled in the sea anchor and raised our tattered and grotesque sails. But now our battered craft floated motionless on a tranquil sapphire sea, with the rags we called sails hanging limply on her masts.

My clock was damaged in the storm, so I had no accurate way of figuring my longitude. I worked out the latitude and then estimated that we had been blown about two hundred miles offshore. Such a distance will not seem great to shoreside people used to speed but it had me worried. We were in the dry season and we could expect long stretches of calm, and a current that slowly carried us offshore. Even with full sail and a good breeze, a junk isn't a racing yacht and now, with the sails in their present condition, it would take a half gale to drive her along. And when I checked our water supply my worst fears were realized. There were just thirty gallons left! I broke the news to all hands. "So," I concluded, "it simply means we'll have to ration the water. Two cups per person per day. It's not much but it'll have to do until we get a breeze. Tani will ration out the water every morning. Each of us will have his own bottle." The unhappy stowaway cast anxious eyes around the horizon and passed his tongue over his dry lips.

Another problem was fuel for cooking. The gasoline was gone, and now we switched to the kerosene stove, but that fuel was running low too.

A week passed—a long, cruel week, unrelieved even once by the faintest breeze or tiniest wisp of cloud. The pitiless sun scorched us by day; the brilliant stars mocked us by night. The *Hummel Hummel* floated motionless on a glass-smooth sea. I tried all the



AFTER THE GALE OFF GUATEMALA. Victim of a "howling Papagayo" wind, the junk had almost capsized during a five-day storm off Cape Desolado. "Now our





## VENGEANCE OF THE SHARK GOD

tricks of the old sailing ship days to raise a wind. I turned toward the direction from which we wanted a wind and whistled with all my might. In fact, I encouraged all hands to whistle—certainly sacrilege on a sailing ship and sure to bring a storm. But it didn't work. I hurled imprecations at the wind gods and at old Neptune himself—all to no avail. Even a storm, we agreed, would be better than a calm. In sail, there is nothing as trying to ship and crew as a flat calm.

Another week had come and gone. Our thirsts grew steadily and I began to get really worried about our stowaway. Depressed and listless, he dragged himself about the decks. For hours he would stare at the horizon, no doubt picturing in his tortured mind green shores and cool bubbling springs. The rest of us kept in the shade as much as possible and soaked our parched bodies in sea water. If only our drinking water had been good—even though there was so little left—the situation would not have seemed so grave. But the water had turned sour and smelled like rotten eggs. We doped it with honey, of which we had an abundance, yet the concoction was anything but palatable.

One night, during the third long week, we had a strange experience. A soft mist enfolded the junk, blotting out the night lights in the sky, the horizon, and even the water itself, and it seemed as if we were floating in a nebulous mass. There was not the slightest movement anywhere. Our sails hung from their gibbets like tattered scarecrows. There was a pounding in my ears and the oppressive silence actually hurt. This feeling of unreality was affecting my shipmates too. Each of us was on the alert, as though waiting for something to happen. No one spoke. We just stood there peering out into the vapor. Suddenly there were some muffled splashes off our port beam.

"What was that?" the stowaway whispered hoarsely. For some reason, all hands turned toward me.

"Must have been a fish," I said slowly.

"That's no fish, Doc," Parky put in. "Listen. Hear it? It sounds to me like someone rowing."

"Who would be rowing away out here?" Tani asked.

Presently the splashing ceased and the tight silence set in

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

again. The stowaway slumped to the deck, with his back against the bulwarks and rested his head on his knees. I continued to stare out into the fathomless haze.

"Hey! Did you hear that?" spoke Parky in a low voice. "Someone's calling. Listen!"

Then from somewhere in that horrible night came a weird cry.

"There's somebody out there, Doc, sure as shootin'. I'll hail 'em. Hel-lo! Hel-lo!"

There was no reply and no further sounds. We fell silent again. The strange atmospheric conditions were telling on our nerves, I was sure, and our imaginations were running away with us.

"Look here," I said, "this silence is getting us all down. Let's snap out of it. Someone go get the phonograph. We'll have some music." With this, I stepped to the rail to empty my pipe. As I glanced down a cold chill ran up my back. Swift as torpedoes, six elongated glowing shapes were coming against the junk. I drew back involuntarily as they flashed beneath the hull, leaving long streamers of fire behind them.

"What record shall we play first, Doc?" Parky called.

"Huh?" I replied absent-mindedly . . . "Oh . . . let's see . . . how . . . how about the *Blue Danube Waltz*? And say, gang, a few porpoises have been playing tricks on us tonight."

"What do you mean, porpoises?" growled the stowaway.

"Just this," I elucidated. "Porpoises were making that splash-ing out there and their wheezings sounded like a cry. Just now I saw six of them swim under the junk . . . Come on, Maestro, let's have some music!"

Before sunrise, the mist had disappeared, leaving us exposed to another blistering day. I shall always remember that eerie night, not only because of the strange occurrences, but because it marked a turn in our luck.

On an early morning watch two days later, Tani was with me at the tiller. It was an unusually clear night and the stars seemed very close.

"I see the light of a ship," Tani exclaimed suddenly. "Astern! Seel!"

I turned halfheartedly and looked in the direction she was pointing. There was a light on the horizon all right, but I was pessimistic.

## VENGEANCE OF THE SHARK GOD

"No such luck," I said, acting the part of a heavy wet blanket. "It's only a star."

I went back to dreaming, but Tani kept her eye on the "star."

"It's not a star. It's a ship. And she's coming this way."

The light was closer now. It was definitely a ship! Tani brought out the flashlight and I blinked out in Morse code the word "water." Presently, a tiny light winked back acknowledgment. I called all hands, and we placed a large lantern, containing the last precious bit of kerosene, in the cabin so the approaching ship could see our outline. The ship, with but a single light showing, came within hailing distance and a voice called, "What ship is that and what is your nationality?"

"American yacht," I shouted back, stretching the truth a little. "We need water."

There was a long silence but the ship didn't come any closer. Finally another hail came. "All right, come alongside."

I had to shout back, "I have no engine. We can't go anywhere."

I thought I heard some cursing and then the big ship moved in close. Dark figures hanging over the rail high above threw down ropes and we made them fast fore and aft. Then a bright flood light was lowered over the side. I identified ourselves, gave our destination, and explained the trouble we were in.

A voice called down, "Is that Dr. Petersen? I'm Captain Rees. I was in Yokohama when you set sail from there."

The ship was a British armed freighter. It was very decent of them to stop at night in wartime for such a queer-looking craft as mine. The crew lowered down bucket after bucket of fresh water and we emptied them into the cleanest of our barrels. The captain appeared anxious to be on his way and kept urging all hands to hurry. The crew also lowered down five gallons of kerosene, two loaves of bread, some tobacco, and a bundle of newspapers. As the ropes were being cast off, someone asked if we had seen any submarines.

"Good-by and thank you," we called.

"Lots of luck, Dr. Petersen," came from the departing ship, "and a fair wind."

Soon she was swallowed up in the darkness. And the junk floated alone in her watery world. When I turned from my reverie, Henry was gulping down cups of water. That night all

## *HUMMEL HUMMEL*

hands had as much water as they wanted. What a sensation it was to drink real fresh water, water without a nauseating smell, which didn't have to be "doctored" up to make it palatable. We had the delicious treat of real bread and fragrant coffee for breakfast. With the extra kerosene, we could cook again and we celebrated the occasion by having a fish fry. Life was good once more, made better by a few gallons of water, some kerosene and bread. Out there we learned to have an appreciation for simple things.

You can see that the shark god failed in his effort to get us. The evil-eyed terrors of the sea gave up the struggle. For the first time in three weeks a fair breeze came up.

*CHAPTER* **VII**



## *Bananas and Iguanas*

I OBSERVED AN INTERESTING PHENOMENON IN THIS AREA, AND THE first experience was startling. Although there was no wind at the time, there came the sound of breaking waves. I searched everywhere trying to locate some partly submerged rocks. Then I spotted a strip of agitated water, about fifty yards wide, approaching at remarkable speed. I tightened in the sheets, steadied my grip on the tiller and waited. But for a gentle rocking, the junk was not swerved off her course. After this tide rip passed, for that's probably what it was, the water remained smooth until the next one came along. Sometimes they came from the southeast and other times from the opposite direction. We never quite got used to these strange disturbances and they were particularly upsetting at night. I was reminded of a multitude of whispering people sweeping on to some rendezvous.

Slowly and cautiously the junk, urged by light and unsteady winds, finally picked up some islands off the north coast of Panama. The sight of land was never more welcome to any seafarer. One early morning, I steered the junk toward a silvery beach where swaying coconut palms beckoned us. By noon we were less than a half mile from a lovely island, Montosa by name,

and we could almost taste the fresh coconuts. Then the anemic breeze died and the junk began to drift away, for the currents were strong thereabouts. Later, it appeared that the current would carry us to green Coiba Island, a few miles distant. We did in fact drift quite close, but not quite close enough, and with the passing of another day we found ourselves among dozens of islands—green bits of land all around, with palms waving an invitation to come ashore and refresh ourselves with cool coconut milk. But we could not reach any one of the islands. A breeze would come up for a few puffs and I would steer the junk inshore, and then the sails would hang limp while the current dragged us away.

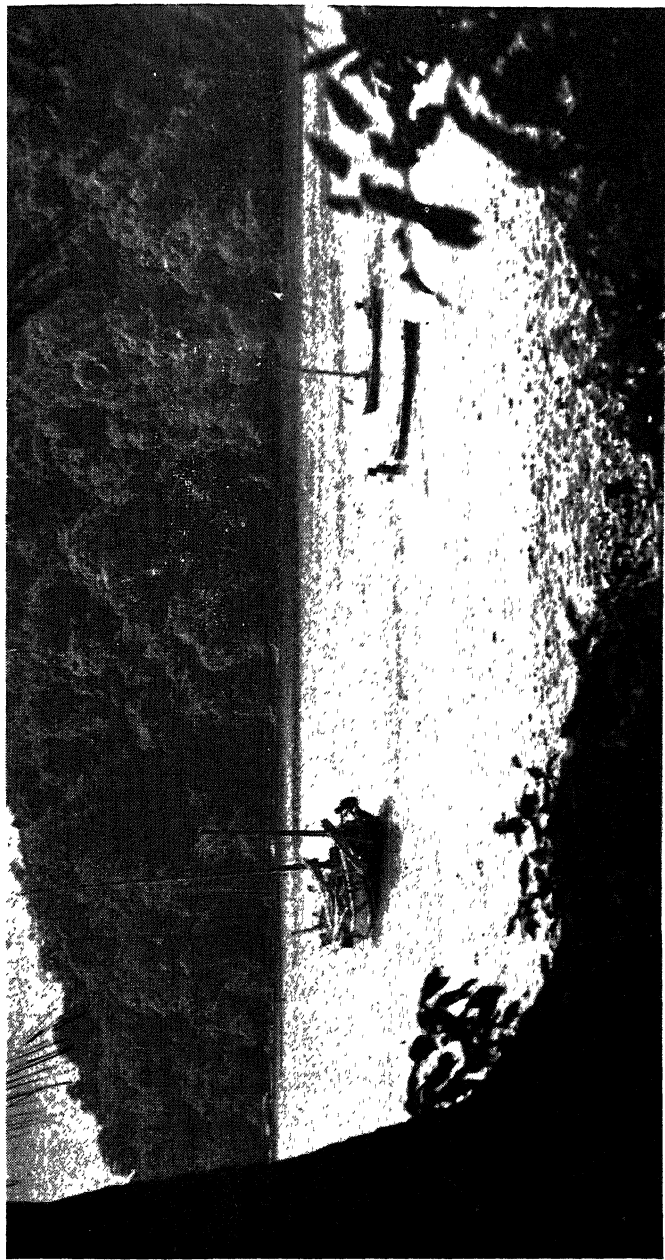
With the passing of another day, we came close to the mainland. There were still many small islands dotting the water, but the near ones had sheer rock walls rising out of deep water. With an unexplained perversity, the current now set the junk bearing down on one. I struggled with the tiller, throwing it one way and then the other in the hope of deflecting our course. We even put oars over in an attempt to swing the junk to one side, as we only needed half a boat's length to clear the rocky cliff. Finally Parky fended us off with the boat hook, and we slipped by that island only to find ourselves in a perfect maze of rocky islets. Fortunately, a faint breeze found us and I was able to sail in and out until clear of them. The next morning we were sailing along the Panama coast.

Thoughts of anchoring were uppermost in my mind as I scanned the jungly shoreline. We had a fair south breeze that would take us in. At last my glasses came to rest upon a perfect tropical setting. Deep in a cove was a glistening half moon of sandy beach with a picturesque grass hut, half hidden in a grove of stately coconut palms.

"There's where we are going to anchor," I shouted, and passed the binoculars to the others.

Late that afternoon the junk was moving, without any apparent wind, for our breeze of the morning had died, over oily, smooth water toward the beach. Birds of brilliant plumage flew over us and the air was heavy with the scent of flowers. Like a thing bewitched, the junk glided forward. No one spoke; to do





IN A QUIET PANAMANIAN COVE, "Deep in the cove was a glistening half moon of sandy beach and a grove of stately coconut palms. . . . Birds of brilliant plumage flew over us, and the air was heavy with the scent of flowers. Like a thing bewitched, the junk glided forward."



## BANANAS AND IGUANAS

so would have broken the spell, for the whole setting was unreal. Four sea-weary mariners relaxed gratefully.

I headed the junk straight for the beach, as there was no surf. In three fathoms I dropped a stern anchor and paid out line as the junk moved ahead. Parky lowered the tattered mainsail and then heaved the lead. In one and a half fathoms we dropped the bow anchor and I could see it lying on the clean white sand below. Just then a huge black shadow moved through the water. It was a manta ray. Disturbed by the splash of the anchors, dozens of these bat-shaped monsters glided silently around the junk.

Seeing a man sitting under the shade of the palms watching us, we tried to attract his attention. But he might have been blind for all the acknowledgment we received to our eager waving. Finally Parky jumped over the side fully clothed and waded to the beach. I didn't know what sort of reception he would get and watched through the binoculars. Presently the figure under the palm stood up and shook hands with Parky. Soon the two of them dragged a canoe down to the water and paddled out to the junk. Tani and I went ashore then and Parky and Henry joined us later. We found two families of Panamanians living among the palms in a very primitive style. At first they were shy, but after we unlimbered our peculiar Spanish, which, fortunately, they could understand, and explained why we had landed, they grew more friendly. They showed us a cool spring back in the jungle and the *Hummel Hummel* crew were soon on their knees drinking their fill. Water never tasted so good. Forgotten were all our sufferings of the past weeks. A young boy, carrying a huge machete, climbed a coconut palm to lop off a half dozen green drinking coconuts for us. It is amazing how these natives can climb. Some, I noticed, notched toe holds with their machetes as they climbed, but others just walked up the trunk, encircling it with their arms.

The house we had seen from the sea was used to store food and personal belongings and to dry tobacco and herbs. The Panamanians slept in woven hammocks slung between palm trunks, and they cooked over open fires. Many half-starved dogs wandered about the camp and there were a couple of puppies, crawling with fleas and swarming with flies. Young Ventura, the man who had first come out to the junk, and his bride, Ambrosia,

were more talkative than the other couple. They had formerly lived at Pixvae, a small town not far from there, where the men had been engaged in diving for pearls and pearl shell. Everyone had made good money and the little community was prosperous, Ventura told us. About two years previously, he explained, some disease had killed all the shellfish. Since then, there had been no diving and no money. Families left Pixvae for other parts of Panama. Ventura and his wife and the other couple settled here as the surrounding area gave them a comparatively easy living. Back in the jungle, Ventura explained, was a cleared area where corn, beans, squash and peppers grew in profusion, planted by a previous settler and abandoned. There were also bananas, coconuts, yucca, sugar cane, oranges, limes, wild turkeys and iguanas. The sea gave them fish. Under these conditions they had little use for money.

We needed some supplies other than those growing in the jungle and Ventura said we could purchase them in Pixvae. He said he would take us there by canoe the following day. While we were talking, night had fallen and the women started their cooking fires. For some time the junk crew had been slapping mosquitos and vicious sand flies that seemed to relish new blood. I mentioned to all hands that we had better get back to the ship while we still had some blood left. But before we could bid them *adios*, Ambrosia gave us a plate of boiled yucca to chew on. Not wishing to refuse their hospitality, we sat down again, but this time in the smoke of fires to keep away the insects. Yucca root resembles a sweet potato and is allied, I believe, to the cassava and the manioc of South America and the taro of the South Seas. Ventura then gave us a drink concocted from sugar cane and hot water which they drank instead of expensive coffee or tea. Next on the menu were boiled iguana eggs. I bit into one of these soft-shelled eggs rather skeptically, but, much to my surprise, found that it tasted like a hen's egg.

The iguana, a lizard-like reptile found in Panama, grows to a length of about two feet and feeds on hibiscus blossoms. It is an ugly-looking monster with a serrated ridge running down the length of its back. When cornered, the creature rises on its front legs, throws up a ruff around its head and opens its wide

## BANANAS AND IGUANAS

mouth. Although it is harmless, this defensive maneuver is enough to stop anyone not familiar with it. Tani cooked these iguanas and the *Hummel Hummel* crew voted it good food. Some people compare it to chicken.

At eight o'clock the following morning, Ventura came alongside in his canoe, a hollowed-out log about ten feet long with a beam of two feet amidships. He sat in the stern while Tani, Henry and I gingerly distributed ourselves in the remaining available space. Parky had wisely elected to stay aboard the junk. There was no room to spare, and we three were afraid the thing would capsize. Only two inches of freeboard kept the water from pouring in. We men paddled, and Tani was given the job of bailing. From what Ventura had said the night before, I thought Pixvae was just around the next point of land. After we got out of Limon Cove (did I mention that this was the name of the cove in which we had anchored?), Ventura headed the canoe up the coast. After an hour of steady paddling on the open sea, I began to wonder just what would happen to us if a wind should come up. The two-inch freeboard would not be much help. As long as the sea remained calm and none of us moved too much we would be all right—I hoped. Huge gray sharks, that swam around us with a savage gleam in their eyes, reminded me of what we could expect if we had to take to the water. Now and then we disturbed barnacle-encrusted turtles sleeping on the surface. One almost collided with us in its frantic efforts to submerge.

Ventura had grown up with a paddle in his hands. Henry and I soon found that our hands and muscles did not react well to such exercise. The sun rose higher in a clear sky, while we baked, sweated, paddled, and wondered where this blasted Pixvae lay. Now and then we rested and Ventura passed around a coconut shell filled with sweetened water, the same stuff they drink hot. It was not very thirst-quenching to our way of thinking, but he seemed to enjoy it. Finally, after two and a half hours of paddling, we headed into a small bay and we saw Pixvae. All I could think of was the paddle back.

We beached the canoe and pulled it up above high water level. The village consisted of some seventy or eighty inhabitants living in palm-thatched houses. Naked children, cows, pigs, chickens,

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

ducks and dogs scattered at our approach. When we were half way down the main street, a sandy-haired man approached and, addressing us in English, said his name was Vasily and that he was of Polish origin. I introduced our party and said we had come for supplies. Vasily led us to a tiny one-room corrugated-iron-roofed house which served as a combination grocery store, drug store and bar. On dusty shelves were cans of Golden State butter, cartons of Lucky Strike cigarettes and small cans of Quaker Oats. The drugs consisted of Bayer aspirin and a large assortment of cure-all patent medicines. I treated everyone to drinks. Vasily, Henry, Tani and I had warm beer—there was no ice in town—while Ventura and some strangers who happened to be there drank the Panamanian national drink, anisette. The natives buy this stuff for ten centavos a drink.

Vasily insisted we have a chicken dinner at his home and, after our drinks, we went there. He was married to a native woman and they had two children. While she was preparing dinner, he showed us his diving gear, pumps and helmets. He also told me of the previous prosperity of Pixvae before the disease killed the shellfish. It was late afternoon by the time we finished dinner, so we began to buy our supplies and soon found that the town did not have much to offer. The whole place could produce only sixteen eggs. We bought thirty pounds of native rice, some oranges, coffee, a bottle of rum and some matches.

The canoe had been crowded but now it was packed. We had almost no freeboard to speak of. Outside of the bay, a light breeze had sprung up, causing little wavelets to splash over the side. Tani started bailing with a half coconut shell. Dusk came suddenly and with it a fresh breeze. Real waves buffeted us now and we were soaking wet from the waist down. My hands were blistered and my arms were numb with fatigue. The coast was just a dark blur and we had to trust to Ventura's knowledge to find Limon Cove. I began to doubt that we would ever get back to the junk without swimming. We were practically swimming as it was. At long last, Ventura headed the canoe toward the shore, and I saw a fire burning on the beach and then the dim outline of the *Hummel Hummel*. We hailed the junk and handed the supplies up to Parky. We three canoers climbed stiffly aboard and



IGUANA READY FOR THE POT. "The iguana, a lizard-like reptile found in Panama, grows to a length of about two feet and feeds on hibiscus blossoms. Some people compare its flavor to that of chicken."





## BANANAS AND IGUANAS

Ventura paddled off to the beach. All hands spliced the main brace with "Nelson's Blood," and then sat down to the welcome meal Tani prepared. So ended an eventful day and a minor exploration along the Panamanian coast.

The next two days we spent in filling our water barrels and kegs and stocking up on jungle provisions. A Panamanian from another bay paddled in with a canoeload of foodstuffs to trade. For six small fish hooks (it seems that small fish hooks were scarce along this coast) and fifty feet of fish line, we received twelve dozen oranges, five pounds of red peppers, fifteen large squashes, and some herbs. A bar of soap bought a bundle of sugar cane and a basketful of yucca roots. From Ventura we bought forty-five fresh coconuts for one dollar. He preferred the money to trade goods.

I was anxious to get under weigh again because the natives kept warning me that when the north wind started blowing we would find it impossible to sail around Cape Mala, which we would have to do to get into the Gulf of Panama. Cape Mala, they said, was a dangerous and tricky spot and, during the north wind season, which was drawing near, no native craft ever attempted sailing around it. With the junk's sails in the dilapidated condition they were, I began to worry about the cape. The morning we sailed out of Limon Cove, a north wind was blowing and as our Panamanian friends waved good-by to us from the beach, they also shouted a warning. "*Viento muy malo, cuidado.*"

The coast along which we now sailed was very irregular, with inlets, coves, small off-lying islands and projecting rocky reefs. The back country was mountainous and heavily wooded. It was a scenic stretch of coast but dangerous. "*Viento muy malo*" became a reality all too soon. The northerly wind along this coast blows in strong gusts and, close to the coast, its direction is deflected by every point, bay and mountain valley. These sudden blasts that swept down on us from almost every direction would lay the junk on her beam ends. We were forced to carry reduced sail, hence our progress was unbelievably slow. We did not dare get far offshore, for our remaining sails were in no condition to stand any prolonged open-ocean sailing. We crept down the coast, anchoring at nights when we could, and sailing during the day-

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

light hours. Some evenings we could not reach a suitable anchorage so we would drift with the current, hoping the northerly would not blow that night.

We lay at anchor all one Sunday in the shelter of Cebaco Island during a blow. The news that I was a doctor must have spread ahead of me, for all morning there was a procession of canoes coming out to the junk. My visitors had cuts, sores, and bruises and they wanted medicines.

Among those boarding the junk was a most interesting fellow who appeared to be a full-blooded African of about sixty years of age. He was not a patient and evidently just wanted to be friendly, for he presented us with a stalk of bananas. His English was amazing, very correct and with a British accent. I offered him some tobacco and we sat and talked. He proved to be an intelligent fellow and one who was keeping up with this changing world.

The people who lived on these islands, he said, were squatters who paid no taxes or rents and rarely used money, but carried on all their business by trading. Their lives were simple and primitive. Men and women lived together and raised children until the priest, who came around about once a year or so, married them and baptized the children. But all did not take advantage of the church's offer even then, he said, because some did not have the necessary money for the services. The fault with the Panamanians, he continued, was that they all wanted to go to Panama City. Consequently, no one tilled the soil and Panama, a fertile country, had to import food products. Once the government, bent on reform, had rounded up all the country natives they could find in Panama City and had sent them back to the country with a full year's maintenance and farm equipment, but before the year was up most of them had again drifted back to the city. He believed that drastic social changes were necessary in Panama before the country could develop. Among other things, he explained an interesting point about the banana palm that had puzzled us. I had thought it wasteful when I saw natives cut down a banana palm to pick a stalk of bananas. But I learned that a banana palm bears only one stalk of bananas during its life span. The old palm is felled when the bananas are picked to give room and light to the new shoot which comes up to bear fruit in nine months.

## BANANAS AND IGUANAS

In the afternoon we went ashore to look around and saw a nice little pig which made us all think of pork chops. A pair of my old white duck trousers bought the pig and the natives killed and dressed it for us. A few pinches of tobacco would buy an egg. We found trading great fun.

After leaving Cebaco Island, we proceeded in our same slow way down the coast. The wind was still variable, with powerful blasts, light breezes and intervening calms. The calms were a worry because then the current would drag the junk away from land.

Late one afternoon we dropped anchor in Arena Bay. Ashore we saw a corrugated-iron-roofed house which meant that someone other than a native lived there. I put up our flag with the hope someone would come out and invite us ashore. An hour or so later a Panamanian paddled out in a canoe to bring us the good news we'd been waiting for. His boss, he informed us, was an American who lived in the big house and wished us to come and visit him. We hoped the things we had been joking about would come true now: a real dinner with all the trimmings; a radio with the latest news; cold beer, bread and butter. All hands washed up and put on their best going-ashore clothes.

We were paddled up a fair-sized river to a sandy beach, where we stepped ashore to meet a tall, slender man waiting there for us. He introduced himself as Sandberg. We followed him to his house, where we sat in a room dimly lit by a flickering kerosene lamp. The walls around us were covered with shelves of trade goods, and in a far corner of the room loomed a huge white refrigerator. Our host sat in an old rocking chair as he told us about himself. He was seventy-three years old, a Norwegian by birth, and had been in Panama for thirty years. He was a caretaker for some property belonging to an American estate, which stretched sixty miles in one direction and ninety miles in the other.

It didn't look as though there would be any dinner. Hopefully I looked at the refrigerator but I was doomed to disappointment. He never used it, our host explained; too much trouble. And anyhow there was nothing to put in it. He had a radio, but it was being repaired. He had not heard any news for two months and confessed that he was hoping we would have late newspapers with us. Imagine any late news on the *Hummel Hummel*, three months

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

out of Los Angeles! I was sorry to disappoint him because I could understand how anxious he was to get news from the outside world. Sandberg gave me some good tips on the weather and also warned me about the north winds and Cape Mala. When we took our leave, he loaded us down with bananas and yucca roots.

A few days later we were trying to round a point called Morro Puercos. I say trying, and I mean just that, for strong head winds kept driving the junk back every time I attempted to round the point. Nearby was a treacherous reef where a steamer had sunk with the loss of a hundred lives. Luckily, I found an anchorage between the reef and the point, and there the junk rested in between her tilts with the head wind. It was while we were resting one morning that we were startled to see a power launch, manned by three men, swing around the point. When they came alongside, we found that they were from a United States lighthouse tender which was anchored on the other side of Morro Puercos. One of the men was Captain Pensyres of the tender and another was Lieutenant Commander Bitler of the United States Navy.

"I have been stationed in China," Captain Pensyres said. "When I saw a Chinese junk anchored here, I could not believe my eyes. So we came over to investigate."

I asked them if they could tow us around the point. In answer, they tossed us a line and in no time at all they had us at an anchorage on the other side, near the tender, the *U. S. S. Favorite*. The captain and the lieutenant commander were very much concerned about our voyage. They repeated the warning I had heard so often; it would be almost impossible for me to sail to Balboa at this season of the year. Before they left, they wanted to know how our stores were and if there was anything they could do. I suppose the weather-worn appearance of the junk and the hungry-looking crew worried them. A short while later, the launch was back and a sailor handed us a sack of very welcome provisions. He also took two of our water kegs, washed them out thoroughly and refilled them. When the time came for parting, the *Favorite* to make her rounds of the lighthouses, and the *Hummel Hummel* to attempt to reach Balboa, we on the junk knew we had met a fine group of men.

A week later we had reached Cape Mala but were unable to

## BANANAS AND IGUANAS

round the outstretched point of land. Every attempt was defeated by terrific gusts of wind and a strong head current that drove us back. At night we anchored close inshore and at day-break every morning we made another try. The wind did not blow steadily; some days there was hardly any wind, but that did not help either. We got sick of looking at Cape Mala and we cursed it. We were sea-weary and wanted to reach port. We learned later that our friends on the *Favorite* had not forgotten us. On their return trip down the coast, they had seen from a distance that the junk was still unable to enter the gulf. Probably they had visions of our remaining out there all through the northerly season. Lieutenant Commander Bitler had a solution for our problem. He radioed to a United States Navy tug at Balboa and asked it to pick up a little Chinese junk on its next run with supplies to Cape Mala. Of course we knew nothing of this on the morning that a powerful Navy tug appeared around the cape and headed in our direction. When they sang out to us to stand by to receive a six-inch towing hawser, I could only think that some one on the cape had spotted us and was going to be kind enough to tow us around this bold, bad cape. Parky and I made the hawser fast around the base of the mainmast and the tug started off. This was about nine in the morning. We passed Cape Mala with our colors flying.

"By God, Doc," Parky shouted, "they're going to take us all the way in!"

And so they were. The *Hummel Hummel* flew across the Gulf of Panama at ten knots, the fastest the junk had ever traveled. She was like a surfboard behind a speedy launch, with her bow out of the water and two great folds of white water lying back from each side of her. Parky and I took short turns at the tiller because it required all our skill and strength to keep the junk from swinging from side to side. It was a tense, exciting trip, unlike anything experienced before. At ten-fifteen that night, the tug dropped us at the quarantine anchorage at the outer harbor of Balboa, Canal Zone. And with a "Good night," they were off. We heaved a sigh of relief and said, "Well done, Navy!"

The next morning we passed quarantine and were towed to the upper basin anchorage. Enroute, we passed the *U. S. S. Erie*,

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

the ship that had hailed us off Manzanillo, Mexico. Her officers and crew lined the rails to cheer us as we went by. I anchored a short distance upstream from the sleek gray ship. Presently a cutter put off from the *Erie* and drew up to the junk. A smiling young officer saluted smartly.

"Commander Ashbrook's compliments, sir," he said. "The Commander wishes me to tell you to feel free to use the *Erie's* shore boats, as he noticed you haven't a small boat of your own."

*CHAPTER* **VIII**





## *Two Against the Sea*

THE BALBOA CANAL ZONE PAPER RAN A PICTURE OF THE JUNK and a story which increased public interest in our voyage. We met a host of interesting people and led a very active social life. There were dinners at various homes; luncheon on board the *U. S. S. Erie*; and we in turn entertained aboard the junk. Crowded though our guests usually were, they always enjoyed dinner or tea sitting on water kegs and bunks in the tiny cabin of the *H. H.* I gave a travel talk at the Panama Rotary Club, and then the army chaplains and recreational officers became interested, and, at their requests, I spoke at Army camps all through the Canal Zone. The soldiers, bored with the deadening routine of Panama duty, welcomed an unusual story of adventure. Once we traveled across the Isthmus to Cristobal-Colon to speak at the Army and Navy YMCA, one of the local churches, and the Cristobal-Colon Rotary Club. This was a nice life, of course, but I was captain of a ship and there was work to be done on her. She had been in the water over three months and her bottom had developed a great growth of weeds. "Seaweeds on the junk and whiskers on the captain," some wit remarked, comparing the growth on the junk with the growth on my face.

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

We moved the junk from the Upper Basin to an anchorage off the Balboa Yacht Club. There was a small slipway here where we could haul our ship out and give her a good cleaning. While waiting for our turn on the slipway, we acquired, quite by accident, a dinghy. Parky noticed a small skiff submerged in the black mud when the tide was out and called my attention to it. At the next low tide we sloshed out to have a look. She was about seven feet long and appeared to be in fair shape. We watched that skiff for a week to see if anyone would come to claim her. When no one did, we dragged her loose from her sticky grave, washed her off and, with the aid of two pieces of wood, paddled out to the junk where we hauled her up on deck. The next few days we spent in scraping and caulking the seams. When she was dry and clean, we painted her in colors that resembled the junk. I made two pop-eyes and nailed them on each side of her stubby nose. When tied astern, the skiff looked like a small offspring of our junk. *Hummel Hummel* had become a mother! A couple of days later, when I stepped ashore, I was accosted by a young man who claimed that he owned the skiff. When he had given me reasonable proof of ownership and had thrown in two oarlocks and two unmatched oars, I bought the whole outfit for five dollars.

The dry season was on when we arrived in Balboa and the weather was perfect. We awoke one morning to greet a day that called for nothing else but a holiday and all hands voted unanimously to proclaim one. After breakfast, the three of us piled into our newly acquired dinghy and rowed across the bay to Farfan Beach. When we had beached and secured our boat, I led the way toward the spot where I had been told an ancient Indian burial ground was located. We found a low cliff of black soil and signs of previous excavations. With the shovels we brought along for that purpose, Parky and I began digging, while Tani carefully went over each bit of overturned earth. Those Indians had buried their dead in large earthen urns, and bits of pottery were everywhere. Apparently all the worth-while articles had been removed from the area by other diggers. We found only broken pottery, a few crude arrowheads and some human teeth. Tiring of such uninteresting archaeological work, we shouldered our shovels and hiked back to Farfan Beach. There we feasted on sizzling hot

## TWO AGAINST THE SEA

dogs, plentifully smeared with mustard and hidden in large buns, which we washed down with mugs of coffee. Then, munching candy bars, we struck out across a wide mud flat to where we had moored our dinghy. The tide was out, away out, and Parky and I had to carry the dinghy a good half mile to water. We had been rowing for about ten minutes when Parky suddenly shouted, "There's an iguana!" He let go of the oars to make a grab at a small green reptile swimming alongside, but lost his balance and overboard he went. For a second I thought we were all in for a ducking, but the dinghy righted herself in time to prevent that catastrophe. Parky came up spluttering, "Which way did he go?" I pointed to the iguana and Parky scooped it up and threw it into the boat where Tani and I proceeded to scramble around after it. I finally caught the cold squirming creature and placed it in a straw hat that Tani had bunched together. It was a very young iguana, only about five inches long and colored a bright green. During the excitement, one of the oars had fallen overboard and now was drifting away. Parky swam after it. Without further mishap we managed to get Parky and the oar aboard and resumed our way again.

"What'll we name the little rascal?" Parky asked, and added, "How about Farfan?"

"Let's see," I began. "Farfan, Greeny, it's got to be a good name."

"How about Iggy?" Tani exclaimed. "Short for iguana."

All hands agreed Iggy was a name that suited our little reptilian mascot perfectly. But Iggy himself was scratching around inside of the hat trying to get out, evidently not wanting to be a mascot, at least not a junk mascot. We were three weary but happy people who at last climbed aboard the junk after an unusual holiday.

Finally my turn came for the slipway. On a high tide we floated the junk in where Spanish Joe, the yacht club's boatman, with Carl, a Panamanian Negro who was his helper, soon had the junk on the ways. Her bottom was a jungle of tangled kelp through which scurried tiny crabs; clusters of mussels and barnacles grew everywhere. Parky and I, barefooted and stripped to the waist, commenced the dirty job of scraping the bottom. After we had

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

removed all the marine growth, we washed the bottom with fresh water. Only then did we see how badly the toredoes had drilled the planking. There is a quick method of removing these sea-going termites, and that is to burn them out with a blow torch. Slowly and carefully I went over the entire hull. When I had finished, toredoes were oozing out all over the sides and bottom. In another twenty-four hours, the hull had dried out sufficiently to plug up all the toredo holes with cement. Then, when two heavy coats of copper paint were applied, the junk was returned to her natural element. Now we had the sails and rigging to repair. Our greatest problem was to cut our new mainsail. There was so little left of the original sail we had no pattern to follow. We stretched our new canvas out on the large dance floor of the yacht club and, with blue pencil, lined out from memory the peculiar shape of the junk sail. The foresail was an easier task. Fortunately we did not have to sew those sails by hand. A power machine and a first-class sailmaker from the *U. S. S. Erie* did that job efficiently and speedily. For this thoughtful kindness we are greatly indebted to Commander Ashbrook. The *Hummel Hummel* was now seaworthy again.

Henry, our stowaway from Salina Cruz, had left the junk immediately on our arrival in Balboa and I never saw him again. I suppose he had had enough of junk sailing to last him a long while. After we had been in port nearly three months, Parky decided he liked Balboa well enough to stay and find a job. That left Tani and me with the serious problem of sailing the junk by ourselves. When we crossed the North Pacific there had been four, and from California to the Canal Zone three, if one did not count the stowaway. Now we were two. There was only one way to find out if we could sail the *Hummel Hummel* by ourselves. Set sail for the Southern ocean!

Our departures have always been exciting affairs, for there is a hectic confusion about junk sailing that is found nowhere else. The *Hummel Hummel* looked more often than not as though she had just come in from a long voyage rather than ready to start one. Dozens of people came aboard at the last minute to bring parting gifts and to say good-by. Finally Captain Slaght's launch, *Lone Star*, took our tow-line and our friends hastily departed over

## TWO AGAINST THE SEA

the side into their respective boats, fearful, I imagine, of being shanghaied. After being towed beyond the quarantine anchorage, we hoisted sail and waved a last farewell to our friends in the *Lone Star* as they circled the junk.

Then a huge tanker, inward bound, headed straight toward us and we wildly tacked to avoid being run down. Only when a hail came from her bridge did we notice her name, *Sveaborg*, the tanker that had met us in mid-Pacific. There was Captain Thundberg, shouting through a megaphone, and beside him his wife, waving.

"Where are you bound this time, Petersen?"

"To Peru," I called back, as we waved to our old friends.

"Good luck," came back across the water and the big ship had passed by. Many months later I read that the *Sveaborg* had been torpedoed in the Atlantic. We have always wondered whether Captain Thundberg and his wife survived this unhappy ending of a fine ship.

We were under weigh—bound for Callao, Peru! The huge sticks of incense Mr. Chan had given us were burning fore and aft to encourage the benevolent spirits and Tani set off a package of firecrackers to frighten off the evil ones. Down in the cabin, quite oblivious to all the excitement on deck, Iggy, our baby iguana mascot, munched contentedly on a big hibiscus blossom. His supplies, for as long as they would last, consisted of a boxful of blossoms and tender leaves.

On that happy June afternoon in 1940, as we sailed away upon a new adventure, we little realized the storm that was brewing in the Pacific. But, like a warning of events to come, an ominous mass of black clouds suddenly obscured the sun and, before we had lost sight of the yacht club, a driving rain squall swept upon us.

The dry season in the gulf had ended, but it was two weeks before the full import of what this meant impressed itself on me. The Pilot Book states that the Gulf of Panama is one of the world's worst areas for a sailing vessel to navigate. During the months of the wet season the strong prevailing winds are from the southwest and west and, under the influence of these winds, the incoming Humboldt Current increases its rate of flow. I had

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

stayed too long in Balboa and now, with the wet season in full swing, we found ourselves fighting a losing battle with the head winds and head currents. Instead of pursuing a course to the southwest and out of the gulf, the junk was driven toward the low swampy coast of Colombia. We caught sight, now and then, of the peaks of a towering, mysterious mountain range far inland. We could not see the bases of these crags jutting into the sky, and in our imagination we thought them to be the abode of the storm gods! Down from these forbidding heights came swirling black cloud masses driven by cyclonic blasts of wind to smother our tiny craft in noise, turmoil and torrential rain. Tied to our ship by lengths of rope, we shouted to each other above the voice of the storm while we struggled to lower sail.

Off that coast of Colombia we dreaded the coming of night. During the day we could see, no matter how heavy the rain or how rough the sea. But at night we had to grope about like poor sightless creatures in a blackness that was thick and oppressive. On some nights there was no wind at all. Then the mainsail hung motionless like a ghostly shroud, and the silence beat upon our ears in a painful rhythm. There was the horrible feeling we were being slowly smothered. Crouched in the stern, we waited, trying vainly to pierce the encircling gloom. Suddenly a flaming sword would stab through our cavern of darkness and, for a brief second, bathe the junk in an eerie blue light. We did not move, could not move, and then a rumbling, crashing chaos of sound robbed us of all reason. Those rocky castles in the sky we had seen were falling, tumbling and rolling down into the sea. Then rain would fall in solid sheets. Water cascaded down the mainsail and flowed in torrents off the cabin. Soon the junk would be sprouting streams of water from the scupper holes and stern like a miniature fireboat.

It was on such a night or on nights of shrieking squalls that the main halyard block would always develop trouble. It had to be fixed immediately because our lives depended upon the speed with which we lowered the mainsail. Tani, because of her light weight and size, was the one who had to go to the top of the thirty-foot mast, and, good sailor that she is, she never hesitated when the job had to be done. She would climb into the bosun's



THE CAPTAIN CHECKS A LINE. Head winds and head currents drove the junk perilously close to the coast of Colombia, where "cyclonic blasts of wind smothered our tiny craft in turmoil and torrential rain."





## TWO AGAINST THE SEA

chair and clasp the mast with her arms and legs. I would haul her up. All the time she was aloft my mind was prey to a hundred thoughts of what might happen while she was up there. Much of the time I could not see her, and when I shouted she could not hear me, nor could I hear her voice.

Our new sails stood up well but I soon learned why the Chinese junkmen carry such worn, thin sails. When a blast of wind strikes the sails and they do not rip, something has to give, and it would be the rigging or the masts. Twice the foremast carried away, and although I was able to save the sail each time, I ran out of spare foremasts. An emergency forestaysail was then rigged up to enable the junk to hold her course. When the main gaff broke, I had to splint it as one would support a broken leg, holding the splints by wrapping them with rope.

In trying to fight our way out of the gulf we had to take advantage of every favorable wind. Sometimes we made short tacks of one hour, at other times every two or three hours, and at times, in desperation, I sailed for days on a course opposite from where I wanted to go, hoping to find a better wind farther out. With so much tacking, it was practically impossible for me to plot my position and during those trying months we rarely saw the sun or stars. On one morning watch I noted with surprise a ship, apparently a large schooner under full sail, coming up through a rain squall on our port quarter. She appeared close hauled on the port tack. I decided to hold my course, hoping that visibility would remain good. But even as I watched, the mysterious ship was blotted from our view by a squall which minutes later overtook us. There was enough wind to cause the junk to boil along, so I let her go, even if we were not on a favorable course. Rain fell in the usual deluge and we huddled under a tarpaulin by the tiller, staring astern, expecting any minute to see a tall schooner race out of the murk, for I felt sure she could overtake us. A half hour later, we were in a flat calm, with no rain and fair visibility. We searched the horizon but there was no sign of the schooner. There were a number of black squalls in static position around us, and I explained to Tani that the craft we had sighted could be hidden by one of them. Still I could not understand why she had not overtaken us; at least by now she should be closer than

any of the squall areas. After dark a breeze came up from another quarter, so we changed tack and held to it the rest of the night. The wind shifted in the morning and we changed tack again. This maneuvering kept up through that day and the next night. On the following mid-morning I shouted to Tani, "Look, the schooner! Off there on our port bow."

There was something puzzling about that craft. I studied her carefully through the binoculars. Ours were not high-powered ones, but even so I could see the bellying sails. She was a schooner with all sails set to a strong wind, but our sails were barely filling. It was possible of course that she was getting a wind we were not. By noon she had not pulled away nor had she altered course. She rode the sea bravely, steadily, like a painting. A phantom ship, surely! Shortly after this, a rain squall swallowed her and, although I was determined to run up close to have a look, the wind shifted and I was forced to take off on another tack. When next we had a glimpse of her, she was on the same tack, with straining canvas as before, off our beam this time and farther away. The sameness of her appearance started me to thinking. I hastily consulted the Pilot Book regarding that stretch of Colombian coast. There I found the explanation to our mystery ship: a huge rock reaching up out of the sea, so cut by the elements and tinted by guano that it resembled a ship under full sail. It was called Sail Rock.

One morning before daybreak, Tani awakened me to whisper excitedly, "Allen, there is some kind of a monster swimming alongside the junk."

Aboard ship you learn to wake up immediately and I was on my feet before I asked, "A monster? Where is it?"

She led the way out on deck and silently pointed over the side. A creature of gigantic proportions appeared to have attached itself to the side of the junk. At first my eyes could not gather in the vast details of the creature, which was mottled with long irregular stripes. Then I recognized it: the seldom-seen whale shark. Its massive, stubby head was wider than the junk, and far astern the monster's tail slowly churned the water. I estimated the creature's length to be over forty feet. Dozens of large parasitic fish swarmed over its broad back. As we watched in awe, the great shark came

## TWO AGAINST THE SEA

slowly to the surface and the waves broke over its back like surf breaking over a submerged rock.

"Please don't get any ideas of harpooning that fellow," Tani pleaded.

"Don't worry," I replied in a low voice, for fear of disturbing that granddaddy of all sharks. "My harpoons would be as effective as toothpicks. Let's hope he is not feeling playful."

Fortunately whale sharks are very docile and our temporary companion was no exception. Presently he dropped astern and that was the last we saw of him.

That was our life for two months: sudden squalls, calms, heavy rain, day and night, until now a grayish mold was spreading over the cabin walls. We could have turned back to Balboa. But we said we were not of a lesser breed than the Vikings, Columbus or Magellan. They faced great odds and conquered. So would we.

Then, on the ninetieth day out of Balboa, the junk crossed the equator! In a straight line the distance was five hundred miles! Here was a record of some sort that no one would wish to challenge. We had frequently laughed about the possibilities of Father Neptune climbing aboard when we crossed the line. As it was to be Tani's first crossing, I had planned an initiation for her. We had said we would open our last can of corned beef in celebration. But ninety days of storms, continual tacking, and short rations left us weary and took all the excitement out of the event. There was no initiation and we decided against opening the corned beef. We might need it later.

Father Neptune, who knows the way of the sea and those who sail upon it, through his many scouts, took notice of our craft passing into his southern regions. He knew there was one aboard that junk who had never crossed the line before but who deserved the title "sailor." Although His Majesty was in one of the other six seas, tending to urgent business, he took time to honor Tani. A fat squid leaped aboard with the following message clasped in its beak:

### NEPTUNUS REX

Proclamation by His Marine Majesty:

Be it known to all that on this date, September 24,

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

1940 there passed into my Southern Domain, one Tani Petersen.

Let it be further known that she has proven herself a worthy Daughter of the Sea. Therefore, I, Neptunus Rex, command all my subjects to pay her the respect due her. May the dwellers of the Land and the creatures of the Sky do likewise.

This proclamation will be carried by the Four Winds and by the Ocean Currents.

N.

Suddenly there was no more rain, and a fresh, clear morning dawned, permitting us to gaze hungrily upon a green, mountainous coast. With a gentle breeze, the junk danced lightly over a sparkling blue sea. Upon nearer approach we saw an entrance to a bay and houses nestled against blossom-decked hills. The little village seemed to call to us: "Come in, weary travelers; come in and rest yourselves." Consulting the chart and Pilot Book I found we were looking at Bahia de Carraques in Ecuador.

"Eight thousand inhabitants; two-story houses built of wood," the Pilot Book stated. Paradise with streets of gold would not have been more welcome then, and with a fair wind we rapidly approached the harbor entrance.

At that moment, a white launch, towing a coastal sailing vessel, came out of the bay. When she had dropped her tow, she came up alongside the junk. The four men who manned her stared wide-eyed at our strange craft. One of them glanced at the American flag flying astern and asked, half in English, "*Estados Unidos*, but what manner of ship is this, Señor?"

As briefly as possible I explained our voyage and our desire for food and rest. Immediately he was sympathetic and said he would tow us, as a shallow sand bar extended across the entrance and we might have difficulty sailing in. We dropped all sails and made fast their towline around the mainmast. We had jarring evidence that the bar was shallow when our rudder hit hard twice on the way in.

We dropped anchor off the town and, soon, groups of curious townspeople lined the embarcadero pointing in our direction. A Chinese junk had never sailed into that port before. We felt

## TWO AGAINST THE SEA

wonderful at that moment. All the hardships of the previous months fell away as we gazed happily at the peaceful surroundings. Our first visitor was the port doctor, a friendly English-speaking man named Munoz. He invited us to his home, an invitation we readily accepted. Stepping ashore after three months at sea, we found our legs slightly wobbly but we managed to navigate to Dr. Munoz's house. There we met his charming wife and daughter. They served us tea and the most delicious little cakes. I am sure they realized how starved we were for sweets after the second plateful had disappeared. The doctor was an ardent stamp collector and in one large room the walls were covered with what must have been thousands of stamps. He anxiously inquired if we had any of the newly issued United States stamps. The war in Europe had affected his collecting, he said, as foreign ships were not calling at Bahia de Carraques now. He related sadly how the town was feeling a serious depression for lack of an outlet for its export products of ivory nuts, coffee, rubber, cacao and cotton.

Later we strolled through the town and were delighted with the quiet simplicity of the place and the courtesy of the inhabitants. Ranches in the back country supplied the markets with an abundance of beef, pork, poultry, milk, eggs, cheese, yuccas, potatoes, bananas, large sweet oranges, luscious papayas, and various other kinds of fruit with which we were unfamiliar. The *Hummel Hummel* galley was soon well stocked with all these eatables. Little Iggy feasted on rose petals, and thereby gained a new interest in life. His supply of blossoms had long been exhausted and he had been surviving on a diet of canned fruit.

Visitors came out to our junk continually; many of them brought welcome gifts, stalks of bananas, papayas, and baskets of oranges. A Mr. Miranda and his fine family visited us often, keeping us well supplied with fruits and flowers. On one occasion he gave us a small clay figure of Inca origin which he had unearthed on his ranch. Some people came aboard to try out their English. One of them was the port captain's seventeen-year-old son. He first startled me by the question, "You go earth now?" This had me puzzled and when I asked him what he meant he gazed at me helplessly. Then a bright light came into his eyes. "What name there?" he inquired, pointing shoreward. "Oh," I replied "we

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

call that shore or land." "Land have another name?" "Yes," I said, "earth." He beamed, "Thank you very much for me."

Then there was the time he came aboard with a friend. He had on a new suit. "How do you like my new dress?" he greeted me, and then proceeded to introduce his "sanity friend." I found that the friend worked for the sanitation department.

We left delightful Bahia de Carraques after a rest of nine days, and with the junk well supplied with good food. Very confidently I told Tani that we would cover the seven hundred miles to Callao in short order. Although the weather was dry and clear, our speed did not increase. Head winds and a strong current still plagued us. After a week of frequent tacking, I was cussing the weather once again.

Eighteen days out, we sighted Peru and were struck by the contrast between that coast and Ecuador. We had been sailing along a green coast of high, heavily wooded mountains and sheer cliffs facing the sea. Now, as we looked across the small, debris-littered Gulf of Guayaquil, there rose the barren, deeply furrowed, yellowish landscape of Peru. It reminded me, as I gazed through the binoculars, of pictures I'd seen of the surface of the moon. It was at Tumbes, a few miles to the east of where we made our landfall, that Pizzaro had landed to begin his conquest of Peru. But he had not been traveling in a junk.

After three plunging attempts, we finally rounded stormy and cold Cape Blanco. From this point southward, the coastline changed from the barren hills of the gulf to an unbroken ribbon of yellow sand dunes and a white, spectacular surf that crashed shoreward with an ominous booming. The weather was crystal clear and, though we were close to the equator, the Humboldt Current sweeping up from the Antarctic caused the nights to be cold enough for heavy jackets and extra blankets.

The cold brought a tragedy to our floating world. Little Iggy died. We thought our iguana was thriving on his artificial diet until we ran into the cold weather. He was shedding about this time, and, although we tried to keep him warm by wrapping him in cotton, it was to no avail. Tani sewed him up in a piece of canvas and, with a large bolt tied to the tiny bundle, we dropped him over the side and thus gave him a sailor's burial. Suddenly we

## TWO AGAINST THE SEA

found ourselves missing his perky attitude, and the saucy way he would cock his head, as though listening to what we were saying.

One early morning watch I was trailing a hook with a bit of white rag with the hope of catching a tuna. All of a sudden I felt a terrific tug on the line. There was no thrashing when I started to pull in the line, but something was causing a heavy drag. Then the line slackened and, apparently, whatever monster had been on the hook escaped. But as soon as I let the hook drift out again there came another mighty jerk and then the heavy drag as though I had hooked a mass of seaweed. Carefully I hauled in the line, keeping it taut, but before I could see the object I had hooked, the line slackened. When I brought the hook aboard to examine it I removed a number of round cartilaginous rings, the size of a nickel, with sharp toothlike protuberances on the inner side. Puzzled, I hung over the stern staring into the dark depths and played the white rag lightly over the surface. When a dozen white torpedo shapes swept past the stern I turned my flashlight upon them. The creatures were giant squids, at least four feet long! With their short tentacles armed with barbed suction rings, they had lashed at the white rag, but their weight, dragging through the water, caused the disks to pull out.

On the fortieth day out from Bahia de Carraques, we were off Lobos de Tierra, a barren guano island lying nine miles off the Peruvian coast. For three days we tried to sail past this island, but calms and currents prevented us. Over four months had passed since we had left the Canal Zone and our valiant craft had begun to show the strain. The long months in the water had worn off the copper paint, and toredoes were honeycombing the bottom. We were sailing in a sieve! Water rose so rapidly in the cabin that we were forced to bail every four hours. We estimated we bailed out over a hundred gallons of water every twenty-four hours. If you figure out the weight of this water, you can readily see that we were getting our daily exercise. Our life had become a deadening routine of standing watches, bailing, tacking, repairing the rigging, shifting the heavy iron ballast to reach the spouting worm holes, and cooking. We had little time for sleep. The fear hung over us day and night that a section of the bottom might suddenly crumble away and in one surging gush, the ocean

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

would pour in. As anxious as we were to reach Callao, we were forced to take time out to repair the hull. Lobos de Tierra would have to offer us a friendly beach.

When we made our decision, we were close to a small open bay near the lighthouse on the southeastern tip of the island. A light breeze carried us in. The splash of the anchor and rattle of chain brought a group of men out of a small shack built a few yards back from the beach. One of the group carried a rifle. After staring at us for some minutes, three of the men, including the one with the rifle, walked down to the water's edge and floated a balsa raft. While two squatted on their haunches, the third paddled the clumsy craft out to the junk. We helped them aboard and found they could speak no English. Tani came to the rescue and we learned something about our visitors. The man with the rifle, short and heavy set, was called Sanchez and he was the guardian of the island. A scholarly old man, who introduced himself as Marques, proudly informed us that he had been the lighthouse keeper on the island for thirty-five years. Just recently the government had installed a mechanical light. Now his job was finished and he would retire to the mainland. The third member, who kept silent, had a club foot and wore a huge crucifix around his neck. Mentally I found myself calling him "Juan de Dios."

Sanchez was very friendly and apologized profusely for carrying a rifle, explaining that one of his duties as guardian of the island was to shoot sea lions and sea gulls that preyed upon the eggs and young of the guano-making gannets. Sanchez said there was a better anchorage farther along the coast where he had his home and office. So we hauled up the anchor, and our new-found friends had the thrill of their lives sailing the junk to Gramma Bay. Marques took the tiller first, but after he nearly capsized us Sanchez tried his hand. A fresh breeze came up and the junk, so weary a short time ago, raced along with her lee rail foaming, while Juan de Dios and I tried frantically to lower the mainsail. Our helmsman narrowly missed the rusting hulk of a four-masted bark, wrecked on a rocky ledge at the entrance to the bay. Once inside, we moved serenely toward a broad sandy beach where we dropped anchor. Sanchez proudly pointed out his house, the guano loading wharf, storage buildings, and sheds on the beach where his men dried fish.



## TWO AGAINST THE SEA

That evening we had dinner with Sanchez and Marques. And an interesting meal it proved to be. First we toasted Peru and the United States with *pisco*, a fiery drink. Then came steamed gooseneck barnacles, looking like overfat worms but very delicious. These creatures are gathered from the rocks and only the long neck is eaten. Next appeared a gannet-egg Peruvian omelet, fried fish and rice. It was a really satisfying meal for us junk sailors and doubly appreciated by Tani, who, for the first time in many months, did not have to do the cooking. The meal was cooked and served by a somber Indian boy.

There was no radio on the island but small sailboats carried supplies and mail from the mainland every week. Just that day, which happened to be Armistice Day, a boat had arrived from the mainland. We heard the latest news: Roosevelt was elected for a third term.

After dinner we sat out on the veranda listening to Sanchez tell us of his life on his island of birds. Tani was the interpreter.

Lobos de Tierra is a small island of smooth, rolling hills, absolutely devoid of vegetation. By day it glares a grayish white, with nothing except for a few houses at Gramma Bay and a lighthouse at the other end of the island to break the monotony of the scene. A man seen walking along one of the trails stands out in sharp relief. By moonlight the island is a slate-gray shadow—a dead land, but for the winking eye of the lighthouse. And I thought of Marques living on the island for thirty-five years!

The island is a sanctuary for gannets and pelicans and is protected by the Peruvian government. Countless generations of these birds have covered the entire island with a layer of guano many feet deep. Sanchez was the head man, with about twenty Indians working for him. He and his crew kept the egg-stealing fishermen, who came from the mainland, away from the island, and also protected the birds from all their natural enemies, namely sea-gulls and seals. A government water boat came every six months to refill the cement storage tanks. It rarely rains along that coast of Peru. Sanchez recalled a slight rainfall ten years before and the strange sight of green vegetation springing up. But, without further rain, the plants soon perished.

Only once a year is there any special activity on Lobos de Tierra. After the young birds have taken to the air, workmen

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

arrive from the mainland and a certain number of tons of guano is sifted, sacked, and loaded onto small coastal steamers that carry it to Callao. After that, all activity ceases, and peace and quiet reign so the birds will not be disturbed upon the approach of another nesting season. Two weeks each year Sanchez spends a vacation in the gay capital of Lima.

On the following day, Sanchez took us on a tour of the island. The pelicans and gannets lay their eggs in shallow depressions in the ground. Nesting season was in full swing when we were there, and we threaded our way through thousands of birds that were sitting on their eggs. The pelicans had one part of the island and the gannets the other. In the early morning the air is filled with birds going out to the fishing grounds while other birds sit patiently on the nests, awaiting the return of their mates. The male and the female take turns sitting on the eggs. Sanchez said these birds mate for life and use the same nest year after year.

If a young gannet flutters out of the nest, the parent bird makes no attempt to bring it back, and one of the jobs of the watchmen was to put these fuzzy babies back under their mothers' wings. Dozens of little ones are found lying dead from cold, a foot or two from their nest. It was a wonder to me how the adult birds knew their own nests when both male and female happened to fly away at the same time. Apparently, in some cases, they did not, as I saw birds fight away other birds trying to get to their nests.

We found the mating antics of the young males interesting to watch. A male gannet will scratch out a shallow depression in the ground very earnestly. Then he will strut, with his wings trailing and head held high, around and around the nest, all the while whistling a shrill plaintive call. He is so intent about his business that one can stand close by without interrupting his mating dance. An unattached female attracted by his call and antics will circle overhead, stretching her neck to look down upon her wooer. Presently she will alight near by and the male will pick up a small stick in his beak and prance around his nest with his head bobbing up and down. He has popped the question. If the female accepts, she will pick up a stick also and join him in the dance around what now is their nest.

The pelicans were much larger than their relatives seen along

## TWO AGAINST THE SEA

the west coast of North America, and more colorful. Skeletons of these birds showed remarkably large bone structures, but thin walled and very light. We did not go through their nesting place because of the vermin that swarmed over the ground.

I had explained to Sanchez about the need to repair our craft and he had offered to help beach the junk. This proved to be a bigger job than either of us had anticipated, even with the help of all the available Indians. First we stripped the junk of ballast and all heavy gear, which was quite a job itself when you consider that some chunks of ballast weighed 200 pounds. Our idea was to slip rollers under the keel and, by means of a double block and tackle, pull the junk up on the beach on a high tide. The first try was not successful. Sanchez's men buried some iron rails in the sand to anchor the tackle, but, when twenty of us started to heave on the rope, the junk only quivered and the rails came up out of the hole. The second day we buried them deeper and packed them down with sacks of wet sand. All day we heaved, jacking up the junk at intervals to slip under planks and log rollers, and by late afternoon had the *Hummel Hummel* up on dry land.

Toredoes had honeycombed the keel so badly it crumbled under the rollers like wet sawdust. Many of the bottom planks were but thin shells with the interior eaten away. When I saw how extensively the hull was damaged, I knew I could make only temporary repairs. A ship's carpenter with plenty of wood and the proper tools would be needed to do the job.

I set to work scraping the bottom carefully, because I could have dug gaping holes in a dozen places, and then let the wood dry for three days. While we waited, we spent our time exploring and fishing. On one beach we found dozens of dead squid, their heavy bodies measuring four and five feet long, and ending in short thick tentacles armed with round barbed rings. They were the type of squid that had so mysteriously struck at my hook when we first reached the coast of Peru. Their mouths or beaks were as strong and large as a macaw's.

The waters around the island abound in seafood of many kinds. We dragged the depths for scallops and came back with a boatful. We fished off of the wreck of the bark, and, combining business

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

with pleasure, I gathered a quantity of pitch from the decks of the old craft to coat the bottom of the junk.

When the junk had thoroughly dried, I caulked all the spots that would stand caulking. Following this, I coated the bottom with hot pitch which I had melted in an old oil drum over a wood fire. This was a hot and dirty job. After two days it was done and the junk was ready for the water.

We soon found that getting the junk out of the water was one thing but getting her back again was something else. We could not budge her. The rollers sank into the rotten keel and stayed there. It began to look as though the *Hummel Hummel* might be a permanent fixture on the beach of Lobos de Tierra. We struggled with the task one day until late afternoon when a large sea-going tug of the Peruvian navy steamed into the bay.

This was an unexpected visit and all hands gave way to the excitement of the event. Sanchez rushed up to his house to put on a clean shirt and trousers. In a few minutes he was back to get his shoes and ask us if we wished to go with him out to the tug. The *Hummel Hummel* crew accepted and, doing a rapid change of clothing ourselves, we joined him on the wharf from whence his boat crew rowed us out to the tug.

Her commander, Lieutenant Raygada, proved to be a friendly chap and, after introductions, offered us a round of *pisco*, the Peruvian national drink. Then we took him ashore to show him the junk and explain the difficulty we were in. He generously offered to pull the junk off the beach the following morning. He even went further and said that when he returned from a run up the coast, he would tow us to Pimentel, a small port on the mainland, some sixty miles distant. There, he assured me, I could find carpenters to repair the junk. We had dinner aboard the tug that evening and were entertained by an accordion played by one of the crew members.

At six-thirty the next morning, we took a manila line from the tug. She took up the slack, started the junk moving, and then the line broke. We broke three lines, and, although the junk moved slightly each time, she still was not afloat. We decided then on sheer manpower. Sanchez rounded up his twenty Indians and Lieutenant Raygada sent ashore twenty of his sailors. Forty men put their shoulders to the *Hummel Hummel* and gave a mighty

## TWO AGAINST THE SEA

heave. She moved, but a roller punched a large hole in her hull below water line. Sanchez came to the rescue with a sheet of copper, canvas, oakum and white zinc, and the sailors patched up the hole. Tani stood on deck to take the tiller, while with wild cries the men heaved mightily. This time the *Hummel Hummel* floated off the beach.

She still leaked, but not quite as badly as before.

Lieutenant Raygada's tug made her journey up the coast, and, on the following day, was back in the bay with bad news for us. He had radioed his superiors in Callao regarding towing us to Pimentel. Their reply stated that he must charge us forty *soles* (about eight dollars) an hour for the job. He estimated it would take about ten hours to cover the sixty miles. That was more money than we had to spend on towing, so we had to decline the offer. Sanchez was shocked by this turn of events and his pride was hurt by what he considered a mercenary act by his government. With tears in his eyes, he apologized for the actions of the naval officers in Callao.

We thanked Lieutenant Raygada for his help and told him that we would have to sail the junk to Pimentel. As his tug left, there were three blasts on the whistle and the whole crew lined the rails to wave us a farewell.

We made immediate preparations to get under weigh, because every day the *Hummel Hummel* stayed in the water, the leaks increased. Sanchez loaned us Pablo, one of his trusted men who knew the coast and the currents thoroughly, to pilot us. Pablo was a stolid Indian from the fishing village of San José on the mainland and had grown up on sailboats. With his expert help, we could expect to reach Pimentel in the quickest possible time.

Reluctantly we took leave of Lobos de Tierra. During the three weeks of our stay, we had grown attached to the strange, lonely island and had developed a real friendship with Sanchez. Nowhere in our travels had we come across a man so willing to help strangers, so cooperative and friendly, so unselfish.

Pablo, wrapped in a blanket, seemed a part of the tiller. He rarely slept and spoke only when it was time to tack. He couldn't speak English, but he knew what he was doing and I knew what he was doing, so there was no need for conversation.

"Mista," he would call out from his place by the tiller, and I

knew we were going on the other tack. My job at these times was to see that the jib sheet was clear and then secure on the new tack. Pablo sailed the junk beautifully, running her inshore so close to the crashing breakers that my heart stood still, but always, at the right moment, putting her about and gaining with every tack. For, you remember, we were still bucking the Humboldt Current.

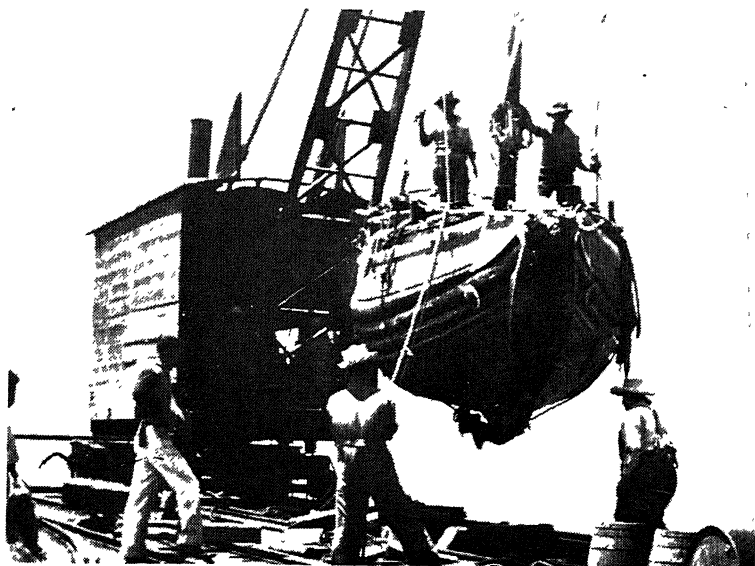
We were five days reaching Pimentel. When the anchor rattled down at the anchorage two miles off shore, I wondered how the *Hummel Hummel* would ever get repaired in that port. A tremendous ground swell set onto the beach.

Pablo probably caught what I was thinking, for he pointed to a fishing craft heading in to the beach. These native crafts are open boats, about thirty feet in length with a single mast and a lateen sail. The one we were watching went in under full sail. At times she was out of sight in the trough. Then, perched high on a wave, she would catch the full impact of the wind and speed shoreward like a swift bird. When she reached the breakers, I expected to see the boat go end over end. A wave caught her, lifted her, and, with white water boiling around her stern, she sped like a surfboard toward the sand. When she touched bottom, the sail was downed and the crew jumped out to steady her. Men rushed down from the beach with rollers and, with the next wave, she was rolled high and dry. It was an amazing bit of boat handling. But I could not picture the *Hummel Hummel* behaving so gracefully.

Lying at anchor was worse than sailing. The junk rose dizzily upon the peaks of the swells and then slid down into the valleys between. Within a half hour, an anchor chain snapped under the terrific strain and we lost one of our precious anchors. Fortunately, we swung close to the end barge of a long string of such craft moored to a buoy, and we tied up to it.

We were wondering how we would get ashore when a diesel tug swung alongside of the junk. We had to jump across a stretch of water to get aboard, because the swell made it impossible for the tug to come very close. To miss might mean being crushed between the junk and tug.

The ride ashore was an exciting one. The tug was beamy and powerful, but it took skillful handling to keep her in control .



OUR CRAFT TAKES TO THE AIR. Putting in for extensive overhauling at Pimentel, Peru, the *Hummel Hummel* is lowered by crane onto the long steel pier.

#### SHOVING OFF.

"Forty men put their shoulders to the *Hummel Hummel* and gave a mighty heave" to return the junk to her natural element, after emergency repairs at the guano island of Lobos de Tierra.







## TWO AGAINST THE SEA

when a swell lifted her up and threw her forward. Our destination was a mile-long steel pier extending out from the beach. When near the end of the pier, the tug swung around to head into the swell. From high above our heads, a steam crane on the pier lowered a boxlike conveyance that swung perilously over the heaving tug, and we hastily scrambled in. A signal was given and up we shot to be gently set down on the pier. Peruvian dock workers greeted us as we stepped out, a little breathless after the ride.

The shipping firm of Piedra y Hijos got the job of repairing the *Hummel Hummel*. They were well equipped to do the work completely, since they owned the tugs and the wharf equipment and maintained a large ship-building yard. Of course I did not know exactly how much work had to be done, so it was decided to get the junk out of the water so the carpenters could look her over. The *Hummel Hummel* would be lifted out of the water by a fifteen-ton crane and placed on the pier. I liked this idea better than any attempt to take her through the surf.

Early one morning, on a particularly calm day, a tug towed the junk up to the pier. Ballast and all heavy gear were taken off. Then strong wire rope slings were slipped around the junk fore and aft, with spreaders placed across the deck to prevent squeezing during the lifting operations. The slack was taken up in the wire rope, everything was in place, and the *Hummel Hummel* rose in the air. I held my breath as my ship swung high above the water. What if that cable should break! The giant arm of the crane swung in and the junk came to rest on the pier as gently as one would set down a basket of eggs.

When the bottom was thoroughly scraped, the boss carpenter, or *maestro*, as he's called in that country, and I went over the repair details. It would be quite a job. Nearly all of the keel and a number of bottom planks on each side had to be replaced. We needed a new rudder and rudder block. The mast was split badly and I decided to get a new one. The entire hull needed calking and painting. Piedra y Hijos said they would do the whole job including the hauling out and launching for 600 soles. This was extremely reasonable and I told them to go ahead. The *maestro* said the job would take at least three weeks.

We couldn't live on the junk during the repair work but did

not want to move into a hotel. Señor Cuneo of Piedra y Hijos came to our rescue with an offer of an unused pilot's house on the pier. This was a large one-room building with a window looking out over the rolling surf and beach. There was a closet and an old-fashioned one-holer of the type glamorized by Chick Sale. We moved in with all our gear. The bed from the junk and the gasoline stove fitted in perfectly. We had a small table, and our books went on a shelf, and we hung pictures on the walls. We were soon snug in Casita Petersen.

*CHAPTER* **IX**



## *Ships That Pass in the Night*

PIMENTEL IS A DRY, WIND-SWEPT TOWN BUILT ON THE SAND DUNES. There is a certain charm to the adobe houses with their small balconies, the colorful plaza or market place, and the quaint cobblestone streets. Life moved at an even tempo and the people were very friendly. Sugar was the main product exported, but the European war had seriously cut into this business.

One day I received a startling letter from a young lady in Lima in which she had enclosed a snapshot of herself. Miss X, as I shall call the writer, desired to go to the Marquesas Islands because she had heard that the Marquesans were returning to the arts and crafts of their ancestors. She had seen much of life, she wrote, and she longed for the simplicity of those islands, free from the unnatural struggle of civilized society. Her chances of getting there had been remote until luckily she heard of my craft. Would I entertain the idea of sailing to the Marquesas Islands with her as a passenger? She assured me she would make herself useful on board. She could assist madam (as she called Tani) or she could cook.

"Say, Tani," I burst out. "Suppose we start sailing westward from here. The Marquesas, Samoa, the Indies, and China. We will then have sailed around the rim of the Pacific."

Tani may have been thinking ahead of me on this, for she replied, "Let's do it. The junk is repaired now. But I wonder just why Miss X is so anxious to get to the Marquesas Islands?"

I wrote to Miss X to tell her we could take her to the Marquesas Islands, but, before anything definite was agreed upon, we should meet and she should see our junk. She would also have to share expenses. A few days later came a telegram saying she would arrive in Chiclayo on a certain day.

We were there to meet her when she stepped off the bus in front of the leading hotel. She was a thin woman of a type neither young nor old and she spoke with an accent. Later, in a secluded booth in a Chinese restaurant, we learned something of her background. She had been born in Italy of German parents, had been educated in France and England, and spoke, besides the languages of these countries, German, Italian, Spanish and Russian. I asked her what passport she had. With a searching glance at me, she slowly handed over a German passport, remarking she was anxious that I read some letters in English attached to the back page. These letters appeared to be merely identification from a South American auto club. Prompting with a question now and then, I was able to get something of her immediate history.

She had traveled all over Europe, England and South America. She had acted as a traveling companion to an elderly lady, but at present she was doing translations in Lima. Before the war started, she was receiving some money from a small estate in Italy. She had been in Spain before and after the revolution. She stated she knew France thoroughly. She had moved usually in diplomatic circles and told us amusing anecdotes about young French and Spanish officers. She said she had a chance to marry a wealthy Brazilian but did not want to take the fatal leap. After I had found out all I could about her, I explained that if she sailed with us she might run certain risks.

"What if a British warship stops us at sea?" I asked. "They would yank you off immediately, with your German passport."

"Do you think they would bother with one lone woman?" she asked.

"I'm sure they would. It's something for you to think about.

## SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

And another thing," I continued. "What about the French in the Marquesas Islands?"

She laughed. "I can handle any Frenchman. I twist them around my little finger."

"Well, you had better see our junk before you make up your mind. It's no yacht, you know."

Our first meeting came to an end and she said she would come down to Pimentel the next morning to see our ship. While the creaking bus swayed along the road back to Pimentel, Tani and I discussed our strange prospective passenger.

About mid-morning of the next day, Miss X appeared on the wharf. We saw her talking to Redhead, one of the dock foremen, whose name actually was Max Richard Redhead. We waved and he signaled one of the launches to take Miss X out to our junk. We were riding at the end of a heavy hawser, the strong current keeping us about five yards off the wharf. We never pulled the junk up to the wharf to take guests because of the heavy ground swells. It was easier and safer to use the powerful and sturdy launches that were always handy. We had a job trying to get Miss X from the launch aboard the junk. Black, skinny Colombia, an excellent boatman, made two tries at the junk and each time the huge swells almost set the junk on top of the launch. On the third try, sort of in-between swells, he swung in close and Tani and I grabbed wildly for our visitor and pulled her aboard.

No one came aboard our junk in Pimentel without getting seasick. Miss X was no exception. She staggered down into the cabin and collapsed on the bunk. But, after a moment, she raised herself to look carefully around the cabin and then abruptly announced, "I've seen enough. I'm going ashore." Surprised at her short visit, we helped her on deck. The launch came by and she made a flying leap for it while we stretched far over the side to give her support. A little later we joined her ashore and the three of us went to the casino to drink *pisco* sours. I sensed a change in her attitude toward sailing to the Marquesas Islands. She now explained that she was not sure she could raise her share of the expenses.

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

"I have some jewelry in Lima," she said. "I will see how much money it will bring. I will let you know."

We saw her to the bus and waved till it rounded a corner. That was the last we ever saw of Miss X. A week later I received a letter from her saying that she could not raise the money and was leaving to marry the man in Brazil. She wished us a pleasant voyage. Who she really was I do not know. I do not believe she ever wanted to go to the Marquesas Islands. What she expected to find when she arrived in Pimentel I can only guess, but I am sure it was not a Chinese junk. I was more than ever intrigued with the idea of sailing to the Marquesas Islands. Could something unusual be happening there? I was determined to find out.

I wrote to the Peruvian hydrographic office in Callao for charts of the islands to the westward. What a shock I received when they wrote back saying they did not have any of the charts I needed. There was only one thing to do, unless I wanted to sail without charts, and that was to write air mail to friends in Balboa to send me charts from there. I did this and then began the tiresome wait for the charts to arrive. I wrote to Mason Turner, the American consul in Lima, telling him of my decision to sail to the Marquesas Islands. Because of the European war I didn't know just what regulations might have been put in effect and I wanted to be on the safe side. We also dispatched letters to all our friends telling them of our plans.

We began provisioning the junk for our westward jump. Food in Peru was cheap and of fair variety. We salted down a quantity of beef and pork. We bought a few pounds of dried fish from the Indians. To preserve the eggs we would carry, Tani packed some in a five-gallon tin of vegetable fat, a local product equal to our well-known brands at home, and some in a huge jar of salt. Dr. Cabrera gave us a good supply of thin strips of beef, dried the way the hill Indians prepare it. The Cabrerases also gave us a package of *mondongo* (dried tripe), and two large boxes of native candy, one being made of the *mamey* fruit. During the weeks that followed, we thanked the Cabrerases many times for their contribution to our food supply. At the great market in Chiclayo, we bought potatoes, onions, garlic, sweet potatoes,



## SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

macaroni, rice, coffee, peanuts, sugar, flour and cornmeal. Northern Peru grows sugar cane and a by-product of the sugar industry is a molasses called *miel de canna*, a clear amber-colored syrup with a delightful flavor. As we always craved sweets when at sea, I bought ten gallons of this honey of the cane. To round out our stores we added a few bottles of red wine and a few bottles of *pisco*.

At last the long-awaited charts and a pilot book arrived and we set March 10 as sailing day. Early on that morning we went ashore for the last time, to say our farewells. At the port captain's office we picked up our clearance papers and shook hands with Van Huerk and his staff. We dropped into Piedra y Hijos to say good-by to Señor Cuneo and chief clerk Señor Gutierrez, but shortly found the entire office force crowding in to shake our hands and to wish us *muchos felicidades* and *bien viaje*. As we walked back to the dock, townspeople and fishermen called friendly farewells to us. Out on the long wharf was the ten gallons of *chicha* I had ordered, and now the foremen, Montenegro, Zapata, Redhead, Ordoñez and Cruz, came up to dip into the milky liquid with a half coconut shell and drink to our health and good voyage. After them came the dock workers in twos and threes, sweating and grinning, to salute us with a gulp of *chicha*. Finally we climbed onto a rope sling and were lowered down to a waiting tug. As we pulled away from the wharf, the winchdrivers blew their whistles, and every man on the wharf waved a farewell.

Aboard the junk once again, I checked over all the running and standing rigging and removed the lashings from the sails. Tani was busy packing away last-minute things. Pimi, the small black mongrel pup Montenegro had given us, sensed that something unusual was about to happen, for she sulked in her box.

There came a hail from an approaching tug and we saw Dr. and Mrs. Cabrera. There were more good-bys and more handshaking, before the tug towed us clear of the *balandras*, lying at anchor. Tani stood by the tiller while I raised the mainsail and foresail. We dropped our tow. We were under weigh! The tug circled us once while those aboard waved farewell. Our sails filled and the Stars and Stripes fluttered bravely astern. The wind was

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

light from the S.S.W. and I set our course west. We were making about one and a half knots. By late afternoon the white coast of Peru had faded from view. We were alone upon a wide, wide sea. The new addition to the crew, Pimi, came up on deck to sniff the wind over the weather bulwarks. Just at that moment the mainsail flapped slightly. Pimi took one horrified look upward and then threw herself below to scurry into her box. There she crouched, looking out apprehensively as if expecting the thing to pursue her. Poor Pimi never overcame this dread of the mainsail.

We were not too anxious to leave Pimentel, for we had grown to like Peru and her friendly people, but it was good to get out to sea again and to have the sails filled to a good breeze and our staunch little craft on course. It was good to breathe the pure tangy salt air and to feel the gentle heave of the decks under our feet. It was soothing to hear the swish and the lapping of the water against the black sides of our ship. Yes, ports are fine and one gets attached to some of them, but the sea has a deeper, more satisfying charm.

During my early watch on deck that night, Tani sat beside me at the tiller. A great round moon hung in the clear sky. The junk, freed at last from her chains of anchorage, moved gracefully over a silver-splashed sea. Into the night of the universe we sailed, travelers without time or place. Peru was of another world. The friends we had made there took their places in my memory with those others in Bahia de Carraques, Balboa, Limon Cove, Salina Cruz, and Los Angeles—all of another world, the land of yesterday, while we sailed through the silver night across an ageless sea.

"Well," I said quietly, "beyond that horizon lies the Marquesas Islands, first discovered by an expedition of the Marques de Mendoza, Viceroy of Peru, 'way back in 1595. He landed in the southeast group and did not know anything about the northwest group, which remained undiscovered until the American ship *Hope* of Boston touched there in 1791."

"You've been reading up on discoveries," Tani laughed.

"Then there is Samoa," I continued, "and Torres Straits and Bali—beautiful Bali! On that course lie many storms, wet sullen

## SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

days, and black nights of shrieking winds; these will be spaced with days of warm sunshine and inspiring sunsets. We'll see the bluest of the blue oceans, white sandy beaches, and graceful swaying palm trees. There'll be happy, laughing brown people to welcome us. There will be adventure! Are you still glad we started in this direction, Tani?"

She snuggled closer before replying. "I'm glad we're sailing westward. We'll see so many things beyond that horizon. We'll have hardships, I know, but we'll also have fun and we will share all of it together, and that's what I like best."

We sat a while longer, dreaming, until I happened to think of the time. "All right, sailor," I said, "you had better get below for some sleep. It will soon be your watch on deck." When Tani had gone below, Pimi pushed her black head up so I lifted her out on deck. She was nervous at first and then settled down near me to sleep. When nine o'clock came I called Tani for her watch on deck and Pimi couldn't understand the confusion. I suppose she wondered about the strange thing she was on that was never still and her queer master and mistress who kept changing places on deck.

Early the next morning, Tani sighted the lighthouse on Lobos de Afuera. At noon it was bearing southeast by south and I set our flying jib. This sail, a huge triangular piece of light canvas, was run up between the foremast and the mainmast. It balloons up and, when the wind is right, has tremendous pulling power. Upon advice from the cook, I rigged up a hook with strips of white cloth and trailed this astern. A few minutes later, I had a fine fat skipjack on deck. Pimi was the most frightened dog I've ever seen. It was her first encounter with a real live fish. She would not even look at it but jumped below to hide. Poor little Peruvian señorita! Life's adventures were coming too fast for her.

For the evening meal Tani served sizzling skipjack steaks and boiled potatoes with slices of fresh lime to squeeze on the fish. With bread, sliced raw onions, and a glass of red wine each, we had a royal feast. We didn't have butter but we did not miss it, nor did we have many of the things one demands with a meal ashore. Yet some of the best meals I've eaten have been those

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

simple ones concocted by Tani far out at sea. And as far as health goes, I always felt better when miles from shore.

When we were about one hundred miles off the coast of Peru war overtook us in the form of a speeding cruiser that nearly put a tragic end to our voyage. At four-thirty one morning Tani came below to light the deck lamp which had gone out. I awoke and asked, "Is everything all right?"

"There's a strange ship without lights passing astern of us," she replied. "The deck lamp had gone out and I wasn't going to bother about it until I happened to glance around. What a start I got. I could just barely make out the dark outline of a huge ship. I'll call you if anything happens." She climbed out on deck with the lighted lamp. A second later she called out frantically, "They've swung around! They're coming right at us fast!"

I leaped out of the bunk, grabbed a pair of dungarees and scrambled up on deck. A towering ship with a curling white bow wave was bearing down upon us at full speed. Thoughts raced through my mind in those seconds, but there was nothing I could do to prevent the collision. We braced ourselves for the crash. The next instant the high-sided ship passed our bow so close the foremast scraped her sides. A call-to-stations siren was wailing and hoarse commands rang out above us. I could see men looking down at us. Sudden anger swept over me and I roared out at them all the salty descriptive words I could think of. The warship (I could see she was a naval vessel), lay-to about a half mile to windward. I ran up the American flag and Tani flashed a light on it just in case our visitor might have ideas about us. Then we waited for daylight wondering what would happen next.

"Maybe they'll fire on us," Tani worried. I had not shortened sail as there was little wind and we were barely making headway.

As a new day pushed the darkness from the scene I saw a large cruiser flying the white ensign, the British naval flag. She moved closer and slightly astern. Shortly, they lowered and manned a boat that was soon rowing in our direction. Here we were under full sail and they put out a rowboat to overtake us. To save face I lowered the mainsail. But we were relieved to recognize a British ship. When they were about a boat's length away, the

## SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

sailors rested on their oars, staring at us in open-mouthed amazement. Apparently they could not believe what they saw: a Chinese junk off the coast of Peru. An officer sitting in the stern politely apologized for disturbing us so early in the morning and then asked my ship's name, registry, and the captain's name. This information was wigwagged back to the cruiser by a signal man sitting next to the officer. The cruiser replied by blinker. The officer then asked if he could come aboard to check over my papers. I said he could and jokingly added to be careful of our paint work when they came alongside. The officer, being a good navy man and respecting paint work, thought I was serious: he bawled his men out when once they let their boat scrape the junk's heavy sides. When the officer stepped on deck, I introduced Tani and myself and asked him to step down into the cabin, but he hastened to assure me that he would rather stay out on deck. He went over my papers thoroughly and wrote the details on a pad while the signal man wigwagged some of the information back to the cruiser. After a while, the recall pennant flew from the cruiser. The officer shook hands with us and boarded his boat. I asked him to give me my latitude, longitude and chronometer time when he got back to his ship.

When they had stowed their boat, the cruiser moved up astern. A voice came through the loud speaker high up on her bridge, "Hello, Dr. Petersen, your latitude—" and there followed all the data which I had requested. Then the voice said, "Pleasant sailing, Dr. Petersen, and keep your lights burning." With that, the cruiser swung off to the north, dipping her flag as she departed. We dipped ours in return.

It wasn't until it was all over that we really relaxed. "I keep thinking," said Tani, "what would have happened if they had hit us."

"Lucky they had such a good quartermaster," I replied. "To come so close took a good eye."

So ended a meeting between a modern and an ancient craft. We often wondered what the officers of that cruiser thought when they spotted us on that early morning. What must have been their thoughts when in daylight they saw a small Chinese junk flying an American flag off that coast of Peru!

For the first time in many months we enjoyed sailing. A week

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

slipped by before we knew it. Peru was some five hundred and seventy-five miles astern. Most of the time the wind was fresh from the south and the southeast. The skies were clear and the junk, like a thing alive, danced over a sparkling blue-and-white sea. It was good to be out again. We were free, with the great ocean to roam over. Our days were never long enough. During the night we stood three-hour watches, but in the daylight hours the tiller was lashed and the junk steered herself. Lashing the tiller did not mean that we had any time off. One of us always kept an eye on the compass, the sails and the horizon. There are a thousand and one things to be done on a ship. Canvas and rope stowed up forward had to be aired out now and then, stores had to be checked over continually for signs of moisture, decay or weevils. Canned goods had to be inspected for rust spots. The fresh-water barrels had to be sounded carefully so that we would know our available water supply. After our experience off the coast of Nicaragua, we were doubly careful on this score. The rigging had to be gone over for any signs of fraying and all running gear had to work smoothly.

One morning I noticed an unusual amount of water in the bilge. A search revealed a small trickle of water coming from behind one of the huge ribs in the galley. As it was below the water line I could not reach the spot from the outside. The next best thing was to caulk around the area tightly and then cover the whole area with a layer of cement. We were only a week out and the junk was leaking! The old maestro's ears must have burned. Watching for a rise in the bilge water developed into another constant job.

Tani and I each kept a complete diary besides my keeping up the ship's log. Figuring out the noon position of my little ship and studying navigation and weather charts took time. I usually glanced over the pilot book daily to give me some foreknowledge of the land and weather ahead. Tani prepared the meals and I helped with the washing up, which meant washing the dishes and pans in salt water without soap. Tani was always rearranging the gear in the cabin, until, after a time, the inside of the cabin and galley were really shipshape—a place for everything and everything in its place. There were also sewing and mending



THE SING-SING BOX. "Once in a while we would have evenings of music . . . sit and dream of faraway places as the strains of the *Moonlight Sonata* or the *Blue Danube Waltz* drifted over the junk."



TANI WASHES DISHES. "So many women have





## SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

to be done, and, when you haven't anything else to do on board a ship, you can always paint. A wooden ship in the tropics needs paint and plenty of it. Every time I tried to paint at sea a rain cloud would blow over and we would have a shower. It was very discouraging.

The foregoing will give the reader some idea of how we spent our time. Many people have asked me what we did with all our spare time, picturing, I suppose, endless days of lolling on deck. Others thought we spent a lot of time reading. We had a small varied library aboard and planned to fit a certain amount of reading into our daily routine.

Every clear evening after dinner when the dishes were done we sat out on deck and read to each other for an hour or more, depending on the light. Once in a while we would have an evening of music from our battered old phonograph. These musical sessions became more and more infrequent as our records grew worn and monotonous. At times we would sit and dream of far-away places as the strains of the *Moonlight Sonata* or the *Blue Danube Waltz* drifted over the gently heaving junk.

I am not a music connoisseur; all I know is that music appeals to me emotionally. It depends on the time, the place, and my own feelings as to what kind of music will appeal at a particular time. Music must interpret something for me. It must start my brain reeling like a long strip of moving pictures. It must call forth graceful dancing figures, dervishes in wild leaps and spins, or grotesque figures in an abandon of motion unknown to human eyes. It must have lights and shadows; tell of valleys, rugged cliffs, babbling brooks, waterfalls and the ceaseless surf. It must be a magic conveyance to bear me aloft, to tumble among the whipped-cream clouds, to walk in the halls of Valhalla, and to swoop again to earth to scan its great expanse at leisure, without hurry. For music must set my brain upon a great highway of sight, sound and motion.

Our small mascot, Pimi, did not enjoy the seafaring life. She would get a faraway look in her eyes now and then which probably meant she was dreaming of her former easy existence in sun-drenched Pimentel. Tani made a canvas harness for her, and in stormy weather we could tie her as we were tied to our

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

ship. I nailed a couple of strips of wood across the open stern so she would not slide overboard. But in spite of all the attention we paid her, she was a decidedly unhappy animal. When the sea was bumpy, Pimi would tuck her stubby tail down and slink into some dark corner below deck. There she would crouch with an expression of great misery and reproach upon her black face as though thinking: just heartless shanghaiers of young dogs, that's what you people are.

Ten days out and we had covered approximately nine hundred miles. The weather grew more squally and threatening, but we had little rain. Fishing was excellent and, at this time, we were catching tuna. We never tired of tuna steaks fried in olive oil, or a chunk boiled, cooled and then made up into salad. Tani turned out a salad that deserves honorable mention, for it shows that, some of the time at least, some of our menus equaled anything ashore. For lunch one day she surprised me with shredded cabbage, raisins, apples, walnuts, with a dressing of olive oil and lime juice. Bananas did not keep well; they were gone within a week; but the apples, mangoes, oranges, limes and cabbage lasted very well.

Flying fish were abundant. Great silver schools would spring from the water in sparkling formations, pursued ruthlessly by those "rainbows in motion," the dolphins. Overhead, the graceful frigate bird would hover to swoop down with unbelievable speed and snap up a luckless flying fish, trying to escape. Thus the poor flying fish were caught between two enemies. During the night some flying fish would land on deck and we would have them fried for breakfast. They are a delicately flavored fish, reminding one a good deal of trout. My only complaint was that they never landed on deck in sufficient quantities. One night, while I was below, sleeping, a flying fish flew into the cabin and landed on my bunk. I was awakened by the thud of its landing and its frantic flopping. You can imagine my surprise. This one measured ten inches in length and was one of the largest we had seen.

If you study a chart of the eastern part of the South Pacific, you will notice an E. D. marked there about a thousand miles due west of Pimentel. After this E. D. (meaning existence doubtful) there is a date, 1878. A ship in that year sighted break-

## SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

ers and discolored water at that latitude and longitude. I believe another ship passing at a later date found nothing unusual, therefore the E. D. Many times as we were approaching that area I studied the chart, wondering just what did lie in that mysterious part of the ocean. I changed my course to run north of it, for I had no desire to sail into an area of phantom breakers in a Chinese junk. We were thirteen days out of Pimentel when we reached the vicinity of E. D. The weather had been squally for the past twenty-four hours. Early on the morning of the thirteenth day, the southeast breeze suddenly died away. Packed, bulging masses of dirty gray clouds crowded the heavens. We could hear the rumble of thunder in the distance. The junk had slight headway. Abruptly we entered an area of bounding, confused water where small waves leaped up in every direction like a tide rip. The junk lost headway and trembled while the sails flapped and shook the rigging. A light breeze came up that shifted about, puffing from various points of the compass. The junk rolled on her beam ends, and alternated this motion by pitching wildly. The ocean around us seemed to be boiling. I pulled the sheets tight to keep the main boom from tearing the rigging to pieces. We hung on while the junk did a complete circle again and again, moving slowly, not answering the tiller, as though she were undecided which way to go. I could see no signs of discolored water or any breakers. This phenomenon continued for two hours before the southeast breeze returned, the clouds rolled away, and we sailed into smooth, normal-appearing water. It was a strange experience. Maybe we had passed over that spot marked E. D.

The days flowed into weeks and the weeks finally added up to one month. The weather had been variable, some days of rain squalls, some days of beautiful but calm weather. After thirty days at sea, our food supplies were holding out well. We still had potatoes, onions and garlic, and a few apples, limes and two oranges. Bread had disappeared some days before. Tani was making up for this deficiency by baking her famous "junk" biscuits and rolls. There were a few cookies hoarded away with one bar of chocolate and some other candy. We had a few jars of fig jam and banana jam left. Tani was sorry she had not put

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

up more of them in Pimentel. We also had some dried meat and quite a bit of salt meat. There were also about a dozen eggs still packed in salt. Our fresh water was holding out well and had remained sweet and drinkable. We used about a gallon of water per day for the two of us, including that used for cooking.

When we were forty days out we began to see numerous birds: frigates, gannets and many other kinds, all busy fishing. Every evening we carefully scanned the horizon, for that is the best time of day to see land. Then came the great event! That indescribable sensation of sighting a speck of land after many days at sea. At one o'clock in the afternoon of the forty-third day, I saw a high island far to the southwest of us. According to my position, it was Fatu Huku. I changed course to bring us in closer and, for the rest of the day, we stared at "our" bit of land. What an intriguing sight to see an island rise up out of the sea, for it seems just like that. Days and days you search the horizon and see nothing but the ocean, the clouds and the sky. But one day, one minute of one day even, you look and don't believe your eyes, for there, breaking the smooth line of the horizon, is an irregular bluish mass. Your island has risen from the sea! When we were about ten miles off Fatu Huku, we could see Hiva Oa, a much larger island of the group. At noon on the forty-fourth day out of Peru, we were about twenty miles off Nuku Hiva, our destination. We could also see the islands of Ua Huka and Hua Pou. We had a light breeze from a surprising and not very good direction, the northeast. The wind charts would lead one to believe the winds blew almost continually from the south, southeast and east. I found to my misfortune that they also blow from the northeast around the Marquesas Islands. At six in the afternoon we were about five miles off Cape Martin, Nuku Hiva. There was a light wind from the northeast and we barely moved ahead. Tani and I sat on deck staring at this fascinating island. Sheer, eroded rust-colored cliffs climbed up from the vivid blue sea and huge pinnacles of rock, like fingers, pointed to the sky. Farther inland were high, deeply furrowed barren ridges that looked worn and aged. One could see such dry ruggedness in some of the mountains in our western desert country in America. It is believed the Marquesas Islands are sinking. If

## SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

such be the case, I could picture those scarred ridges once towering majestically, snow-capped, above a great land.

"The Marquesas Islands," Tani whispered. "We talked of the so often and now here we are. The island looks so mysterious."

"Yes, a phantom island, surely," I replied. "I almost expect to see it vanish before our eyes. I feel pretty happy about hitting these islands."

Tani laughed. "There's enough of them. How could you miss? Anyway, don't forget the junk has eyes and the Peruvian pirates must have cleared them extra well."



*CHAPTER* **X**





## *Blue Water and Green Islands*

SIGHTING LAND AND DROPPING ANCHOR OFF A SUITABLE BEACH IS not a consecutive performance with a sailing vessel. At one o'clock in the morning of the forty-fifth day, we were in a flat calm about one mile offshore. At daybreak, we were two miles offshore and westward of the entrance of Taiohai Bay. A strong current setting westward carried us past our objective and, to add to a discouraging situation, a head wind from the northeast came up. At such times I wished for an auxiliary engine. We tacked hopelessly against the weak northeast breeze, waiting for a shift in the wind. The smell of vegetation and the perfume of flowers was wafted out to us. We spent an entire day attempting to gain a mile or two but we only drifted more toward the west. Drenching rain squalls passed over us and we were thoroughly miserable. Pimi nervously sniffed the wind and ran around in circles.

At three o'clock on the morning of the forty-sixth day, I decided to head for Hua Pou, an island some twenty-four miles to the south. As we drew near the small island, just at daybreak, we remarked how much it resembled the towers and battlements of an ancient castle, and how the blue water we sailed over was like a moat surrounding this lonely citadel. A puffball of white cloud

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

rested on its spires. Then the sun, rising clear and hot over the rim of the world, burst the cloud, and vagrant winds ran off with the shreds. Scarred, scorched peaks were revealed at the center of the island, supported by broken ridges and rocky mounds that trailed inland from the shore. Strips of green lay in the lower valleys and made verdant paths down to the white encircling beach. The peaks were worn and desolate and, like Nuku Hiva, looked as if they too must once have worn a snowy crown. Stripped now of their regal adornment, baked by a tropical sun, they appeared as stern old men waiting for the last comforting cool embrace of the ocean. Approaching Hua Pou in the early morning is a sight one does not soon forget.

By noon we were a half mile offshore, floating on a brilliant blue-ink ocean as smooth as a tabletop. I was attempting to get into Aneco Bay, as this was shown on the chart and was just three miles farther along the coast. But it appeared as though the elements were conspiring against us. The light but steady breeze gradually faded to irregular puffs. Believe me, it was maddening. I did not want to spend another night at sea with land so close. I studied the chart and took some bearings and found we were off Haka Hau cove. I changed course and headed in toward shore, hoping I could cover that short distance before the wind died entirely and the current carried us away. The sails flapped as they emptied and filled and we crept toward our goal. At two o'clock in the afternoon of the forty-sixth day at sea, we dropped anchor in the clear water of Haka Hau cove. Down came the great mainsail and then the foresail. Tani lashed the tiller and put up the American flag. Pimi hung over the bulwarks, nervously excited by the scent of strange land. Our voyage from Peru to the Marquesas Islands was completed! We sat on the bulwarks and gazed at our strange island. The cove was small, horse-shoe shaped, with the sides steep and rocky. At the head of the cove lay a broad white sandy beach on which a lazy surf broke rhythmically. A narrow valley, green with hundreds of coconut palms and other vegetation, ran back from the beach to end a few miles away in a towering bluish cliff. Our eyes were drawn to a shaft of rock that rose to a great height from a ridge near the head of the valley. The top was split in such a way as to give the appearance

## BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS

of two heads. At the time I had remarked to Tani that it seemed like a sentinel guarding that valley and its people. Later I was told a legend of those pinnacles, which is recounted later in this tale.

A few palm-thatched sheds on the beach covered some row-boats and canoes with outriggers. Presently we saw people coming through the coconut palms down to the beach. A group of men and boys dragged a large outrigger canoe from one of the sheds and launched it through the surf.

Soon a small flotilla was rapidly approaching the junk. In the lead was a large canoe paddled by six men. Women had now plunged into the water and were swimming out toward us. Presently the junk was surrounded by the boats and swimmers, and brown Marquesans swarmed aboard, laughing and as happy as children. The helmsman in the large canoe climbed over the bulwarks. Dressed in white shorts and white shirt and having fair skin, he looked European. Holding out his hand, he smiled and said something in French. I shook hands with him, pointed to the flag and said, "American." He apparently spoke no English. A friendly Marquesan with a wide grin stepped up.

"Me, Kokani," he said as we shook hands. "This, chief," indicating the first man. "Name Toume. He big chief here. Me savvy San Francisco. Long time ago me work on ship."

I introduced Tani and we shook hands with the other men in the chief's party. By this time, the junk was overflowing with smiling, giggling brown men, women and children. Most of the men and boys wore shorts but a few wore *pareus*, the wrap-around skirt of the Polynesians. The women wore long Mother Hubbards, apparently a holdover from early missionary days. One husky islander with a short red beard adorning his rugged face was clad in a beret and a pair of pink shorts. This bronzed giant giggled like a schoolgirl. He knew no English and spoke only a few words in French. I immediately named him "Big Boy." Pimi did not know what to make of all those strangers. First she barked at them but finally became friendly enough to make a pest of herself by chewing at their bare toes. The Marquesans would not strike her but fled to the bulwarks and hung their feet over the sides. I invited the chief and the older men

down into the cabin. With Kokani interpreting. I told them about the junk and our voyage. I explained how we had tried to get into Taiohai Bay. They were extremely interested in the junk and expressed surprise that we had traveled so far in such a small ship. They examined the cabin and galley, showing much interest in such modern conveniences as the toilet and the gasoline stove. I gave the chief and the other men some tobacco. The chief wanted to know if we wished to go ashore. We said yes and eagerly looked forward to walking on land once again. I asked if it would be safe to leave the junk open and unguarded.

Kokani laughed. "All good boys here. The chief tell the people. Not one go on your ship when you not here."

Toume, the chief, took the steering paddle while Tani and I sat in front of him in the long canoe. Two men were forward of us as paddlers. The others swam alongside, steadying the outriggers. We came to the breaker line. All eyes glanced astern for the right wave to ride. A smooth swell rose astern. Toume shouted. The men dug deep with their paddles while the swimmers grasped the outriggers and the side of the boat to steady it. With an exhilarating glide, we shot toward the beach on the crest of the wave and struck the hard sand with a thud. Barefooted and carrying our shoes, we leaped over the side into the shallow water. Then, accompanying the chief's party, we took a wide road leading through a grove of coconut palms where a group of women and children squatted. All smiled friendly greetings as we passed. Farther on we met a few men and they came up to shake hands. We were impressed by the friendliness of those Marquesans. A short distance back from the beach lay the village. Other roads intersected the road we were on and houses were built along the side streets. The wooden dwellings with corrugated sheet iron roofs were on stilts about four feet off the ground. A short distance from each house stood a small shed with piped running water which served as the family bathhouse and laundry. Cooking was done outside over an open fire. The village was clean and had a well-kept appearance. Breadfruit, lime and orange trees laden with fruit were everywhere. I saw many fat cattle and pigs and chickens.

In the chief's house we saw modern beds but most of the vil-

## BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS

lagers slept on mats on the floors of their homes. We sat on Toume's veranda and he introduced us to his wife and daughters. One, about seventeen, looked like a modern French girl with her brown hair done up high on her head. She had been to Tahiti and must have gotten the latest fashion hints from the French magazines. Kokani soon appeared with half a dozen fresh young drinking coconuts. One of the daughters came out with a carved wooden bowl full of oranges. These things tasted good to us deep sea sailors.

Unfortunately we spoke no French and few of the people could speak English, so our conversation lagged. When we were ready to go back to our ship, the chief sent along a huge stalk of bananas, a large basket of oranges and limes, and three bunches of drinking coconuts. Going out through the surf, a wave caught the bow and raised the canoe high into the air. I thought we were going to capsize, but we didn't. The next wave came swiftly and cascaded over the boat. We were drenched but it was lots of fun. Tani and I laughed as loudly as the happy Marquesans.

About one hundred and twenty-five people lived in that green and beautiful valley of Haka Hau. Fresh water for their use is piped down from a shallow lake up near the base of the mountain ridge. The Marquesas Islands are subject to periods of drought and, at such times, the water supply of Haka Hau nearly runs dry; but old-timers told us that the water supply of their valley was better than any other on the island. The people formerly were engaged in the copra trade, but since the war started, trading schooners were not calling. Thus their sole source of income had been suddenly and abruptly cut off. Without work, they were without money, which meant they could no longer buy those things they had come to depend on. There was a Chinese merchant in that valley. Is there any place on earth where one cannot find a Chinese? But the Chinese merchant was as bad off as the islanders, for he could not restock. They had no money to spend and he had nothing to sell. So the Marquesans were being forced to fall back upon their ancient culture.

The Marquesas Islands, since their discovery in 1595, have been visited by ships of every nationality. Sailors and traders have lived

and loved and gone their way. The Marquesans were overwhelmed. Today I doubt if there are any full-blooded Marquesans in existence. The Marquesan, mixed with a dozen different races, is dying out, and their story is a tragic one. However, in the valley of Haka Hau, the people were holding their own and even gaining, for we saw many fine-looking children. The women and girls were making tapa cloth, now that they were unable to buy cotton goods. The men were taking an interest in wood carving, and we saw their artistry in many beautiful bowls and spears. Strong vines and barks were braided to take the place of rope and fish line. Fish hooks were fashioned from shells. If left alone for a few years, those mixed Marquesans will be dressing once again in the *pareu* made of tapa cloth and using the implements of the ancients. And they will probably be happier because of it.

The work of the village seemed to be divided among the various men. Certain ones always did the fishing. The waters were alive with fish and it was a steady article of diet for the village. At times the men, wearing goggles, would swim underwater to spear different types of rock fish. Such fishing was usually done in the morning. They worked in pairs, usually a man and a young boy who paddled a small canoe near the swimmer. The men stayed under the water a remarkably long time, and when they came to the surface they exhaled with a peculiar whistling sound. When a number of men were diving, it sounded like a school of porpoises in the cove. Evenings found the fishermen out in their tiny one-man canoes, fishing with hook and line or spearing fish that came within the light of a burning torch held over the water. Those flickering lights, gliding over the smooth sea against the soft tropical night, made an enchanting picture.

One of the fishermen was a most interesting character named Teiki. He was about twenty-nine years of age and had great charm and personality. His appearance was startling. When in repose, his thin face, with a sparse black beard and dark gentle eyes, had the look of an ascetic. Then a slow impish smile would steal across his face to reveal long fanglike teeth. At such times, tiny flames would light in the pools of his eyes, flashing a sardonic warning. Now I saw the face of a faun and I found myself looking for small horns on his head. The torso upon which this remark-

## BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS

able head balanced was compressed like a partially flattened barrel. His arms and legs were long and thin, spidery, but his hands were strong, with long, well-formed fingers. This was Teiki, the Marquesan, with the face of a woodland god and the body of a gnome. He could not swim, but he could handle a canoe. Every morning we found a fine large fish, cleaned and scaled, hanging on our junk where he had left it after the night's fishing. Teiki could speak and understand quite a bit of English. He was married to a good-looking young girl and they had a beautiful baby.

When Teiki was a young boy, his parents had sent him to school in Papeete. To those islanders Papeete is the outside world, the big city, and it was the ambition of every young Marquesan to visit there. One day, shortly after his arrival, he went into a store owned by a Chinese to buy something to eat. He stared in open-eyed wonder at all the strange articles on the shelves and in the showcases, for this boy had never seen a real store before. The Chinese offered him peanuts but these did not interest him. He had eaten peanuts. An odd-shaped object that looked like a horn drew his attention and he pointed at it. The Chinese took one from the case but, before handing it to Teiki, he filled the thing with a white soft stuff. Shocked into silence, Teiki paid his money and hurried out of the store, wondering why the storekeeper had put so much grease on the nice cake. He was sure it was grease, for it looked just like the grease his mother used for cooking. Walking along the street, holding the cone out in front of him, he felt a trickle of the stuff run down into his hand. It felt strangely cold. Timidly he touched his tongue to it. It tasted good! He took a big bite and spit it out quickly. The coldness had burned him. But he liked the taste and tried again more cautiously. That was the way the little island boy learned about ice cream. All Marquesans we met called ice, glass. Teiki said that once a large American yacht arrived in Taiohai Bay with a refrigerator aboard. They gave ice cubes to the islanders to eat. They spat them out quickly saying the glass was too hot.

Teiki told us of an ancient legend of the island. Long before the Enana (Marquesan name for their ancestors) reached the islands, the tall pinnacles of stone seen on the various islands

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

were living giants. These warriors of Hua Pou had a tremendous battle with the giant warriors of Hiva Oa. The fight was long and bitter and Hua Pou won the battle only when a two-headed giant appeared to lead them to victory. Today those giants, now towers of rock, stand guard over Hua Pou. At the head of the valley of Haka Hau stands the two-headed leader, the pinnacle we noticed when we first arrived.

Many Marquesan legends have been lost. When I questioned any Marquesan about his origin, all that I could find out was that his ancestors came from over the ocean, presumably from the east. The ancient Marquesans fought with elaborately carved wooden spears, and long-handled clubs. They did not go in for the throwing spear, but preferred close combat. Their short spears were used as swords, chiefly for parrying and thrusting. There were inter-island battles, and battles between the tribes living in different valleys. Teiki explained how a group of warriors from one valley would spear a man from another valley and eat him. His tribesmen, to avenge his death, would attack them. Warfare was an outlet for vigorous young men who had nothing else to do. There was a certain amount of chivalry in their fighting, too. When two warriors were engaged in personal combat and one broke his spear or club, the fight stopped and they backed away from each other. When a chief was killed, a truce was declared.

One Sunday we went to Joseph's house for lunch. He was a mixture of French, English and Marquesan, but looked completely European. His dress, mode of living, and actions were completely Marquesan. His home was cool and pleasant and surrounded with flowering vines and shrubs. He apologized for his wife's absence, saying proudly she was in Papeete awaiting the arrival of their baby. Joseph was the local health officer and teacher. Adjacent to his house was a small surgery and a well-stocked pharmacy. He ministered to most of the ailments in the valley. Very serious cases were sent to Papeete, but fortunately there were few such cases.

He showed me a large book in which all the births were recorded. Not all the couples were married, but at least the births were recorded to avoid confusion. It seemed to me that in that



## BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS

little valley at least the people were working out their problems in an intelligent and progressive way. The village school had a palm-thatched roof, supported on poles, without walls. Within, on the hard dirt floor, were a dozen low benches and an equal number of small desks. The children were taught the French alphabet, some Marquesan words, and how to write their names in French. For higher education they had to go to Papeete, which few were able to do because of the cost.

We feasted on fried chicken, fried eggs, boiled bananas, baked breadfruit and rice in a detached, screened-in dining room. We tasted the Marquesan national dish, poi-poi. It is of a soft creamy consistency having a fermented taste not unlike that of cheese, and is made from that excellent food—breadfruit. The average meal for the Marquesan is poi-poi and raw fish sprinkled with lime juice and grated coconut. The breadfruit is about the size of a large cantaloupe with a greenish rough skin like a pineapple. The inside part of the fruit is cream color. When it is baked, it resembles a potato except that the texture is softer. With butter it should be great but we never had the two at the same time. Boiled breadfruit with meat gravy is delicious.

Joseph was a genial and friendly host and, after our lunch, he presented Tani with a finely woven straw hat made in the valley, a highly polished two-tone wooden bowl, and a carved coconut shell. Later in the afternoon we watched the young men of the valley play soccer, barefooted. They were husky young fellows and they played a fast game. The chief, the older men, and the boys sat in the shade under a large tree on one side of the playing field while the women and girls sat by themselves on the other side. The sexes seemed to keep apart. The men and boys were always together, fishing, paddling canoes or just sitting around talking.

One day we were surprised to see a trading schooner from Papeete swing into the cove. She was the first ship to arrive there in a long while. The crew loaded a few sacks of copra, some pigs, chickens and a small donkey. The village people swarmed out to the ship to buy soap, needles and thread. The schooner was better outfitted than the junk in those articles. We had been trading various articles from our limited stores to obtain food and curios.

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

The islanders had a different sense of values than we of the western world. One man would bring out a chicken and another a couple of coconuts and each would be satisfied with whatever I gave him. We always tried to be fair, for we didn't want to make anything out of the trade. We felt sorry that we had so depleted our few supplies that we were out of many things they wanted. The men asked for tobacco, fish line, soap; and the young boys, gay bandanna handkerchiefs. The women wanted cloth, needles, thread, fish line, soap and tobacco. The articles we had to spare we exchanged for a supply of food. We always had two or more live chickens tied on the foredeck. There were baskets of oranges, papayas, watermelons, breadfruit, and taro roots, dozens of coconuts, stalks of bananas, and sticks of sugar cane. We lived well in Haka Hau cove.

The people were greatly entertained by our phonograph, for there was only one phonograph in the whole valley and it was broken. Groups of men and boys would come out to the junk in the evening and ask us to play some records for them. Those evening concerts got to be a regular feature. One of the boys had a guitar. After we played a few records, they would sing and play for us. Their music was modern Tahitian, which resembled our Hawaiian music in its soft sadness. One night I persuaded Big Boy to sing us a real Marquesan chant. Few modern Marquesans know those old tribal chants. Sitting cross-legged on the deck he sang:

*Uea pe te metao tohui te hua  
toiki ua topa te ima to he  
hati—hatia hati kohuru  
tomia tepua tairikuriku  
ua koe to haa tai-tai  
te mea vahioo aoha to  
kehuro tu u kehu te mou.*

The translation of the chant is: "What evil though is coming—the hand of the simple fellow drops with the coming of twilight—which buries the flowers—but inflames the pure pandanus trees—the spirit of the air brings greetings from the twilight murmuring for me in the darkening night."



THE SHARK THAT CAME FOR DINNER. The South Sea Islanders believe that the Shark God puts a curse on those who kill these evil-eyed denizens of the deep.





## BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS

Those were wonderful nights. There we were on a Chinese junk anchored in a cove in the Marquesas Islands. The plaintive songs floated over the quiet water and above our heads was a deep blue-black sky dotted with brilliants. Shoreward one could see a few lights and farther back the outline of the rugged mountains. While I listened to those voices singing, I felt the tragedy of their race, and the mystery of their origin. I could almost hear the ghostly warriors shouting in the valley, and see great canoes paddled by strong men. I could not help wondering if the spirits which the Chinese say inhabit every junk felt strange with the spirits of the ancient islanders hovering around us on such nights, or did they have a knowledge of one another in ages long since past?

Six days after dropping anchor in Haka Hau cove, I awoke early in the morning to find a brisk east wind blowing. This meant we could get out of the cove and over to Nuku Hiva. We did not want to leave Haka Hau, but we had a long journey ahead and we could not tarry too long in one port. Teiki came by and I gave him a parting gift of tobacco and matches. I hauled up the anchor, set all sail and started on a tack across the cove that would enable me to clear the rocks on the opposite shore. We were nearing the other side when the wind shifted to the northeast. We could not clear the point. I put about and tried to get back to our former anchorage. With the wind blowing directly into the cove, the junk lost headway. I was getting too close to the beach so I lowered sail and dropped the anchor. The gods of Hua Pou evidently did not want us to leave yet. We were resting after our labors when some of the chief's men came out in the long canoe to extend Toume's invitation to dinner. And they added eagerly, please bring the phonograph ashore. Kokani then spoke up to say we were anchored in a bad place and they would tow us back to our former anchorage. I passed them a line and when they took up the slack I pulled up the anchor. Laughing and singing as they pulled on the oars, they soon had the junk anchored in a good spot.

We washed, put on clean dungarees and shirts, climbed into the chief's boat and went ashore. We were really happy that we were forced to stay in that pleasant cove. On the beach we met Teiki, getting ready to go fishing. With his sly smile he said, "The

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

chief is having you for dinner. Remember we used to be cannibals. Be careful."

Toume served us a dinner well befitting a chief. The table was set with white tablecloth, napkins, knives, forks, glasses, and all the other articles that go on a properly set table. Only the three of us sat down to eat. The women of the household did the cooking and serving. We had chicken that had been fried in coconut cream instead of fat, imparting to it an exotic flavor. There were baked bananas, baked breadfruit, rice, and a dish called Tahitian bananas. This was so good Tani asked for the recipe for her international cookbook which she plans to compile. For dessert we had French pancakes and coffee. As usual, Tani and I gave a good account of ourselves at the table. When we had finished, the women and men of the household ate what was left. I presented the chief with a small quantity of tobacco and an Ecuadorean cigar. He enjoyed this smoke, as all they had in the valley was a rank native tobacco rolled in a pandanus leaf. Out of these materials they rolled thin, match-sized cigarettes.

When it grew dark, lovely Alexandria, the chief's youngest daughter, lit a kerosene lamp. This was a signal for me to start the phonograph. Swarms of flying insects attracted by the light fluttered about my head as I tended the machine. When a record was finished, voices would call out, "*Mei kanahau*" (very good). I believe most of the valley people were squatting in the darkness around the porch. They would have sat there listening to the music all night, so after I had run through our small stock of records a few times I brought the concert to a close.

We were about to set off for the beach after an interesting evening when there came a sudden shower. But rain does not bother those people. Toume stripped off his shirt, which was a mark of office because no other man in the valley wore a shirt. Then he lit a dry palm branch to light the way and beckoned us to follow him. We left the phonograph behind and fled through the rain after Toume and the boat crew. We must have presented quite a sight running from the shelter of one tree to another with the chief waving his blazing palm branch. It was a black night and we leaped, stumbled and ran among the dripping trees. By

## *BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS*

the time we arrived at the beach, the rain had stopped, and we returned to our floating home without further mishap.

The next day Toume invited us to go wild-goat hunting. The goats were descendants of domestic animals that were released or escaped to the hills many years ago. The hunting party was composed of Tani and myself, Kokani and four young Marquesans. We traveled on horseback, which was a surprise to me as I did not know the island supported any horses. It appeared there were wild horses on the island. But the horses we rode were very docile. There were only two saddles, which we used; the Marquesans rode bareback. I carried a .32 caliber sporting rifle as well as a .45 revolver. A narrow rocky trail led out of Haka Hau valley and over a ridge. We rode close to the base of the tall double-headed pinnacle of rock. Once across the ridge, we dropped down into another valley which Kokani said was uninhabited due to the lack of water. The trail led up into the craggy hills. The scenery had a wild beauty that was not tropical but reminded me of areas in California. From one high hill we could see far out over the ocean. Small cloud formations made a changing pattern of light and shadow on the smooth blue water. In the distance I saw the islands of Ua Huka and Nuku Hiva. Tani and I expressed the same thought: what an ideal site for building an island home! For there one would have an inspiring view, a deep bay, and broad sandy beach. Trees and shrubs filled the valleys and ravines, but on the slopes of the hills a vine-like plant grew in profusion. The plant was about a foot in height and covered the ground in a tangled, almost impenetrable mass. The areas that were free of this weed were grass covered.

Presently we saw a large flock of wild goats. They had sighted us immediately, for the whole flock was moving rapidly up onto a high rocky cliff. I marveled at the surefootedness of goats as I watched those animals leap from rock to rock. Dismounting, we left one of the boys to watch the horses and proceeded on foot toward the head of a ravine above which the goats were perched on top of the cliff. We flushed a wild chicken out of the bush and it flew heavily across the ravine. It was a very colorful bird and seemed to show that with domesticity had come drabness for the

chicken. A few of the goats moved down onto another ledge. I raised my rifle and took aim, hoping that luck was with me, for I had not done any shooting for some time. I fired and, to my surprise and pleasure, a goat leaped into the air and came tumbling down the face of the cliff. The rest of the flock vanished. We were some time finding the animal as it had fallen in a rather inaccessible place. It was a young goat and the boys carried it back to the horses. Remounting, we rode on till we reached the top of another ridge. On the other side, a flock of goats were feeding. They had not sighted us, so we drew back and quickly dismounted. I handed Kokani the revolver; we were so close that I thought he would have a chance to shoot one of the goats with it. This was a big moment for him. He crept up to the top of the ridge. I followed with my rifle. When Kokani got to the top, the goats started to run. Kokani ran forward and fired. He fired again. When no goat fell, I thought I would try my luck. I saw a buck with a magnificent head. He was on the gallop when I fired. The bullet struck him behind the shoulder. He did a complete somersault and lay still. The striking power of the high-power express bullets I was using was terrific. The boys and I rushed down to the dead animal. He was a fine specimen with an exceptionally good skin which I decided to keep.

Two goats were enough for food so we started back to Haka Hau valley where we arrived in the late afternoon. I presented the goats to the chief but explained I wanted the skin of the buck. Toume then asked us to stay for dinner and try some of the meat. He cut enough meat from the younger goat for our dinner and then divided the rest of the two goats among the various families in the valley. Again we sat down to an excellent meal. The meat was cooked in coconut cream and flavored with curry.

Kokani was an interesting fellow, and a story he told me showed the childlike nature of his people. Years ago he had shipped as a sailor on an American sailing vessel. His first voyage took him to San Francisco. When his ship tied up at a wharf on the Embarcadero, the island boy was so startled by the immensity of a modern city that he was afraid to go ashore. He said that one day he was sitting on the ship playing his guitar when some sailors on a ship moored nearby heard him playing and called him over. Aboard their ship, he played and sang for them and



## BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS

when they offered him a drink of something he took it. Later Kokani, his mind in a daze, wandered off of the ship. He found himself walking through unfamiliar streets where there were strange people and cold, unfriendly, stone houses. He was lost. He did not know where his ship lay. When night came, he slept in a doorway. The next morning he continued his wandering. For three days he was without food. He said he was afraid to ask anyone as he could not speak much English. Fortunately the police picked him up and returned him to his ship. When he told me his story I could picture the scene: unhappy, preoccupied, city dwellers rushing to and from work, taking little notice of a dark-skinned Marquesan boy, wandering along their unfriendly streets.

It seemed we would never get away from Haka Hau, but we did not care much. One Sunday we were hosts to about thirty men and women. You can well imagine it was standing room only on the junk. When we saw this large crowd approaching, we were surprised. The women were swimming and the men paddled outrigger canoes. There was laughter and joking as brown islanders surrounded the junk and swarmed over the sides. The women wore single calico slip-on dresses instead of bathing suits. One of the girls carried a fragrant flower lei which she hung around Tani's neck. There was much giggling as we showed the Marquesan belles around the ship. "*Mei kanahau*" was heard frequently so I was pleased to know that those lasses appreciated a good ship. Everyone wanted to hear the phonograph and listened intently when a record was being played. When it came time for them to leave, the women kissed Tani and me on each cheek and said, "*Kaofa nui*," the Marquesan equivalent of *aloha oe*.

In the evening a group of young men came out with a guitar. I believe it was the only one in the valley. Kokani gave me two beautifully carved spears which added to our ever growing collection of curios. As we were cramped for space on the junk, we could not collect everything we wished to and we concentrated on a few things. Spears were one of the items I wanted to collect. In return, I gave Kokani a few fathoms of heavy cod line which he highly prized. Later in the evening, Tani made cocoa for all hands.

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

Although we did not take Pimi ashore, she was thoroughly enjoying herself. The ship was steady and her greatest fear, the mainsail, no longer hovered over her head. She raced around the limited deck, a bounding black ball of energy. She made a friendly nuisance of herself when visitors came aboard by playfully chewing on their toes. She frightened small boys by making a wild rush to the side of the junk when they came close in their canoes. Once again she had plenty of bananas to eat and she grew sleek and beautiful. We always fed her fish but evidently she thought she was not getting enough. I mentioned that Teiki hung a fish on deck for us every night he went fishing. One morning I found just a fish head. From the size of the head it must have been a rather large fish. Pimi who usually jumped all over me when I came on deck was suspiciously quiet that morning. She was snuggled comfortably in her box below deck and I seemed to catch a guilty look in her brown eyes. After repeated calls she sneaked out on deck, her stomach bulging noticeably. When I showed her the fish head, she turned away. I tied the head around her neck and left it there all day. She learned her lesson, though, for after that she ate only the fish we gave her.

One morning a faint offshore breeze was blowing. I could not miss this chance to reach Nuku Hiva. I awoke Ickimani, the young boy whom I had hired to help me scrape the bottom of the junk when we got to Nuku Hiva. We heaved up the anchor and raised sail. Tani took the tiller. The sails filled and the junk moved slowly out of Haka Hau cove. We gazed back upon the peaceful scene. *Kaofa nui*, Haka Hau!

It might have been that the ancient gods of Nuku Hiva did not want the junk to land there. By six o'clock in the afternoon, we were about three miles offshore but due to light winds the current again carried us westward of Taiohai Bay. All the night we drifted, or, when there was any wind, tried to tack to the seaward. At noon the next day, we were about five miles west of Taiohai Bay. To complicate matters a fresh breeze came up from the east bringing with it drenching rain squalls. I cursed the island for proving so difficult to reach. Had I plenty of water aboard and no Ickimani, I would have been tempted to sail on to Samoa. But during the night a small miracle took place. At

## BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS

sunset the breeze was fresh and I headed the junk on an offshore tack. We had gained very little in the day's tacking. I did not hold the junk close to the wind on the offshore tack and we moved rapidly away from land. At eight-thirty that night, I headed back toward the island. The wind must have shifted suddenly, for I noticed we were heading east of the bay. I went below at nine o'clock and Tani took the tiller. Ickimani was sleeping soundly, not being used to shipboard routine. Tani called me at ten-thirty. She had not touched the tiller since I went below and we were right at the entrance of Taiohai Bay. We sat there fascinated, hardly believing our eyes. We had fought so hard trying to get into that bay and now the junk was sailing in at night by herself. There was only a faint breeze, but she moved with surprising speed through the water. We passed the small islands at the entrance to the bay. It was not until we were well inside that Tani touched the tiller. There were no lights to be seen and the night was dark. Where was the anchorage? I remembered something about a white sandy beach and stood in the bow trying to see something through the gloom. There was hardly a breath of air but the junk continued to move ahead. Then I made out a white line of beach to starboard. Tani put the tiller over and we moved toward the beach. I heaved the lead and, when I found four fathoms, dropped the anchor. We were in Taiohai Bay at long last. Although we had not reached the bay as originally planned, we had reached the Marquesas Islands from Peru in good time, averaging about eighty-two miles per day for the voyage.

We were up early next morning to see Taiohai Bay of which so much has been written. Frankly, I was disappointed. The bay is large and fairly well protected, but it did not seem to us to have the beauty so many visitors claim for it. I was anchored off the only strip of sandy beach visible and back from it I saw a large European house with well-kept gardens and lawn. From a tall pole in the yard of this house fluttered the French tricolor. About seven o'clock, a rowboat pulled alongside and two men stepped aboard. One was a French Army doctor named Henric, who represented French authority in the Marquesas Islands. He was dressed in khaki shorts and shirt and wore the elaborate high crown French Army cap. The other man was the chief of police,

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

a half Swiss, half Marquesan named Tissot. He was coolly dressed in well-fitting white shorts and sport shirt that looked American made. Tissot spoke good English; the Frenchman very little. Accustomed to the large swanky yachts that visit Taiohai Bay, I do not think they were impressed by my junk. I showed them my papers, told them of our travels and explained that I wanted to put the junk up on the beach to scrape the bottom.

Later in the day, Ickimani rowed Tani and me ashore. While we were drying our feet and putting on our shoes, we both noticed swarms of tiny gnat-like flies settling on our arms and legs, but we did not pay too much attention to them except to brush them away. We then proceeded up to M. Henric's house and were introduced to his wife. She spoke less English than the doctor but Tissot was there to interpret. I noticed that Madame was wearing ankle-length, pajama-like slacks and a long-sleeved blouse. She seemed unusually well wrapped for the tropics until she explained the reason for her strange costume. She and the doctor had recently arrived on the island and, during those first days, she had walked along the beach in shorts. No-no flies had swarmed on her legs and arms. Two days later she was in agony from a burning, itching rash. The bites became infected and, when we saw her, she had ugly sores on her arms and legs. I thought immediately of the swarms of flies that had descended on us. Those tiny creatures must have been no-no flies and we knew then that we were in for some trouble.

Over a couple of rum drinks, M. Henric and his wife told us how unhappy they were out there and how they longed to get back to France. He never went far from his home and Madame, since the fly episode, never went outside of the house. M. Henric complained also that he did not have a suitable boat to visit the other islands of the group over which he wielded French authority. There was one being built for him in Papeete, he said, but he did not know when it would arrive. In the meanwhile he was a prisoner on this accursed island. I asked him about the people over whose health, as a doctor, he watched. From his remarks, I judged he was not in sympathy with them. He had a year more to serve out there and then they could go back to France. We took our leave of unhappy M. Henric and, accompanied by the ever-present Tissot, walked to the village.

## BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS

A main road follows the curve of the bay and there the village is situated. We passed a school and an ancient jail which was still in use. The latter Tissot took great pride in showing. The walls were at least two feet thick. Light entered the small cells through narrow slits. An odd thing about this jail was the fact that the iron-studded main door was always open. The prisoners were locked up only at night, and during the day were allowed outside to work on roads or loll in the sun. Most of the prisoners were in for drunkenness. I saw a number of the townspeople. They were not the vigorous, healthy, brown islanders of Haka Hau. These people were darker, sullen, and certainly not as clean. Tissot was a money changer besides his other duties, and he gave us forty francs to the dollar. Later we found a Chinese storekeeper who gave us forty-one. The chief of police was making a little interest, no doubt. Tissot showed us a collection of well-carved wooden bowls and spears which he wished to sell, but I was forced to disappoint him as we had collected all the Marquesan curios we could carry. Bad times had hit the islands, he said. The copra business was at a standstill. American yachts used to arrive fairly regularly and were the source of a good curio trade, but they were seldom seen now. I thought to myself how disgusted those traders must have been when they saw our weatherbeaten little junk lying at anchor in the bay.

Our greatest find in Taiohai was a bakery! Hardly expecting an affirmative answer, I asked Tissot if there was any place we could buy bread. Following his directions and soon our noses, we entered a ramshackle, rotting wooden building. But that smell of fresh-baked bread could not have been more exciting had it been coming from some glass-fronted, electrically equipped bakery at home. We stood in the center of a room, bare except for a sagging iron bed and a small table, to gaze upon a tray stacked high with golden-crustured loaves of French bread. They were just out of the oven, because I felt one and it was warm. I resisted an overwhelming desire to take a bite and knocked loudly on the wall.

In from the backyard, where we could see a huge wood-burning brick oven, hobbled an old man. He spoke but one or two words of English and kept repeating words in French. Much as I wanted bread, I also wanted to know the history of that old man.

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

With our few words of French and his few words of English and much gesturing, we got along wonderfully. He produced a well-thumbed atlas and pointing to one of the Channel Islands gave us to understand that it had been his birthplace. He had served long in the French Army and had come out to Nuku Hiva many years before with a detachment of soldiers. He had never gone back to France. I was sorry I couldn't speak French, for this old man's life must have held an interesting story.

The bread was one franc a loaf. I bought four to start with. On the way back to our junk, Tani and I ate two loaves. It was real French bread, baked perfectly. What could have been better? Taiohai does not stay in our memories for its beauty, for I've seen bays more beautiful; nor for its gay, laughing Polynesians, for most of them were not gay, laughing, nor Polynesian. Taiohai Bay remains with us because of an old man who baked crusty loaves of French bread.

A few days after arriving in Taiohai, we took our letters up to the local post office to be stamped. The postmaster was most friendly and I suppose proud of the foreign mail that passed through his office. He showed us all the letters lying in tiny pigeonholes—letters for yachts that were to arrive, and letters from yachts that had left. He pulled out a bundle of letters and inquired if we knew the people. Two words leaped at me: Yacht *Wing-On*! We had read of the tragic voyage of the yacht *Wing-On* while we were in Peru. I explained to him what had happened to that little ship and her crew. Letters that might have brought joy were dull, silent things in a dusty pigeonhole on an island that was never reached.

We had a few visitors to the junk. A canoe full of men came alongside one morning with a great collection of spears, clubs, bowls and wooden figures. They carefully unwrapped their prize pieces to dazzle our eyes. Some of those things were works of art but the prices asked were far beyond our reach. I was told that they had little trouble selling their curios to the larger American yachts whose crews bought articles regardless of price.

Then there was an interesting character who came out to the junk frequently with fruit to sell. His name was Joe and he spoke with an American accent. Joe came originally from Tahiti and

## BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS

his ancestry must have been a mixture of many races. He reminded me of some American Negroes I have known.

There were plenty of wild goats and cattle in the hills, but French authority demanded a high hunting fee which prohibited the Marquesan from killing any of the animals. Unlike Haka Hau, the Taiohai people did little fishing. Joe was unhappy about the whole situation. "Bad times," he said. "No copra, no ships come any more, no money. Pretty soon Marquesan man no got pants."

"Where did you learn to speak English, Joe?" I inquired.

"Before, me quartermaster on schooner," he replied. "I savvy Frisco. Oh, that fine place. Joe have good time there. Ship come Frisco. Capt'n give Joe money. Somebody show Joe big house. Have fine bell. Joe ring bell. Door open. Inside beer and plenty *vahine* [girls]. Joe broke. He find capt'n. Get more money. Go back to that place. Oh, fine place that. Ring bell, door open. Plenty *vahine*. Oh, Frisco fine place. Joe want to go back there but now Joe married."

About that time Joe's wife would break in with, "Joe, son of a bitch."

Tissot was a frequent caller. He was always well dressed in clean white shorts and well-made American shirts. His job appeared to be an easy one but Tissot was not happy either. He asked the question I was to hear so often in other places: Would the Americans take over the Marquesas Islands?

We were anchored off the strip of white sandy beach where the American Captain Porter had careened his ships so many years ago. On a favorable early-morning tide we floated the junk close to the beach. Ickimani rowed ashore with the ends of the two lines which he made fast to tree stumps, one to port and one to starboard. While Tani paid out on a stern anchor, I heaved in on the ropes. When the junk touched bottom, we could almost walk ashore on dry land. There was not much of a surf on that beach but I was nervous about the slight bumping that did occur until the tide went out. Ickimani and I went to work with scrapers. The bottom was fouled with a great growth of oysters, barnacles, seaweed and countless small crabs that made their home among all that food supply. We worked fast, as I wanted to

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

get the junk back in the water on the high tide. The planking revealed new evidences of my old enemy, the toredo. I did what I could with the materials at hand; I cemented all the holes in the bad areas—a temporary job that would have to last until we reached Samoa. Before sunset, the junk was back in the water. All hands then enjoyed a swim and a hearty dinner.

The bites of the no-no flies at last caused Tani and me to break out in a burning rash on our arms, shoulders and legs. The itching nearly drove us mad. We were feverish and unhappy on that Sunday morning when Tissot came aboard to inform me that in reply to M. Henric's cable to Governor de Curton in Tahiti an answer had been received saying we must proceed to Papeete immediately. It seemed that, as I had not previously obtained permission from the governor to visit the Marquesas Islands, I could not stay there. When did they expect us to leave? "Today," replied cool M. Tissot.

"But I'm not ready for sea," I protested. "I've got to tighten up my rigging. We need food and water. And I'm not going to Papeete. I'm going to Pago Pago, American Samoa. The governor can reach me there."

Tissot assured me it was none of his doing. I said I would go ashore and see M. Henric. That gentleman was walking down the beach when I landed. I told him I was not ready for sea and could not leave that day. He and Tissot carried on a long conversation in French. Then he asked when I could leave. I told him not before Tuesday, and, if all did not go well, not even then. He looked extremely pained at this but nodded his head. We said good-by and that was the last I saw of M. Henric. We have wondered many times since then what happened to him; whether he and his wife ever got back to France or remained unhappily marooned by the war on Nuku Hiva.

I tightened up the rigging. Ickimani took the kegs ashore and filled them with fresh water. We bought thirty loaves of bread and had the baker cut them in half and toast them in his oven. Tani packed them away in a large tin. We took aboard bananas, mangoes, papayas, coconuts and one live chicken. Monday night everything was ready. Ickimani and I pulled the dinghy aboard. I paid Ickimani his wages and gave him a necktie he particularly



## *BLUE WATER AND GREEN ISLANDS*

admired, although I never saw him wearing a shirt. Joe came out with some fruit and wished us bon voyage and, when he left, he took Ickimani ashore with him. The little junk moved restlessly at anchor in the silent bay.

At daylight, there was a light breeze blowing out of the bay. Slowly I rolled up the anchor chain on the Spanish windlass. Tani stood by the tiller as I raised the mainsail and foresail. We were under way at six o'clock, bound for Pago Pago, Samoa. That was Tuesday, May 20, 1941. Outside of the bay a fresh east wind was blowing and we rapidly left the island. Southward we could see the fantastic peaks of Hua Pou, the stone warriors standing guard over their island. We thought for a moment of our friends in Haka Hau cove. We almost wished we were going back there but we resolutely faced westward. My gaze swept over the tumbling sullen ocean to the far horizon. What lay beyond?



*CHAPTER* **XI**



## *A Closed Port Again*

AFTER LEAVING THE MARQUESAS ISLANDS, WE HAD LITTLE REST. The wind blew strong and gusty from the east, southeast and south. A rough following sea kept lifting the junk and throwing her forward. Day after day under cloudy skies, the wind and the waves drove us before them. Our small ship rolled and pitched so that our muscles ached from the continual bracing that was necessary to keep our footing. The tropics, bah! Rarely did I carry more than half sail, yet our wake looked as if it were made by a power craft. Pimi was as miserable as we were. Her gaiety disappeared, and she would slink around gazing at us with that definitely reproachful look she had. I could almost hear her say, "Why do you do such things? We were happy back there in those islands."

Once in a while a weak sun would show itself at midday, enabling me to get my latitude, but usually my navigation depended on dead reckoning. In Taiohai I had not been able to check my chronometer, the watch that was traveling under that fine name, so it was useless attempting to get a longitude. We had other troubles. The junk began to take a lot of water in the bilge up forward. After much shifting of gear, I found a thin stream of

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

water spurting in around a rib. I caulked the spot first, then cemented it and hoped it would at least slow down the leak. Another time the stern bilge began to fill up too quickly. Water was pouring through a perfectly bored toredo hole. I drove a wooden peg into this opening. There were other leaks I did not find, because our bailing became more and more frequent and we became more and more weary. We were standing our regular watches at night, three hours on deck and three hours below, but the one below rarely got much sleep. With a heavy following sea and a wind that lulled and blew and lulled again, we never knew what would happen and were constantly on the alert. The one at the tiller was tied to the junk with a length of rope. One evening while Tani was at the tiller a huge following sea caused the junk to jibe. The main boom swept across the deck and in an instant the sheet ropes dropped over Tani's shoulders. When the sail filled, Tani was jerked up in the air. By sheer luck, she was able to save herself from going over the side. It all happened in a flash, but we thought about it for a long time afterward.

A few days out from the islands, we found we had a strange passenger aboard. A cricket! He stayed in the cabin and when the sun went down he began his cheerful chirping. Rain and squalls did not stop his merry song. On the watch below, as I lay in my bunk, this little insect would sing me to sleep. He added a country atmosphere to a sullen, tumbling, windy world. Jiminy Cricket, we called him, and we found ourselves awaiting his first notes every evening. We rarely saw him and once for a whole night he was silent. We worried about it and wondered if our little friend had checked out. How pleased we were to hear Jiminy Cricket singing with renewed power the next evening. All was well in our small world once again. Somewhere in the Samoan Islands we lost Jiminy Cricket. He evidently "jumped ship," as the saying goes, lured ashore probably by the graceful, dusky Samoan crickets.

On Tuesday, June 3, 1941, I wrote in the log: "At sunset yesterday a heavy black cloud formation moved slowly up from the south. The wind shifted to the south and was cool but strong. By 8:30 P.M., the angry-looking cloud mass had not come overhead but everything to the south looked so threatening that I

## *A CLOSED PORT AGAIN*

lowered the mainsail to half. The wind increased slightly but the heavy cloud bank hung there covering half the heavens with an impenetrable blanket. The other half of the sky was crystal clear with a bright three-quarter moon shining. Good and evil struggling for supremacy above our heads. And we lonely pilgrims silent in awe. The junk sailed west right on the fringe of the cloud mass. About 9:00 P.M., the formation moved over us a little and a fine drizzle fell. Shortly after, the clouds suddenly disappeared. This was one of the strangest cloud formations I have ever seen. The breeze continued cool and fresh from the south and we sailed under a brilliant moon."

Fishing was fair on this voyage. I caught tuna now and then, which we enjoyed, as we think fresh tuna is wonderful food. One time I was fortunate enough to spear two small rainbow runners. This small smeltlike fish is very good eating. Due to the rough weather, we had a number of flying fish on deck every morning. Pimi would wait expectantly for her share of these trout of the sea.

We kept a lookout for the Flint and Suvaroa islands but saw neither of them. We should have passed fairly close to Suvaroa but must have missed it either at night or in one of the foglike drizzles we had so often. And we were chilled by the thought of how easy it would be to run onto a reef.

On June 8, at one-thirty in the afternoon, I sighted the Manua Islands about twenty miles southwest of us. These islands are the most easterly of the Samoan group. We were making good time for we were only twenty days out of Nuku Hiva. We were abeam of Manua, some five miles offshore, by six o'clock. After dark the southeast wind increased to a half gale. It was a fair wind but we didn't need so much speed. I lowered the mainsail until we had only a strip of canvas up, but we continued to rush through the water. It was the beginning of a rough night, with frequent rain squalls passing over. A tremendous sea was running on the other side of Manua, which made the situation worse after we had cleared the lee of the island.

The white-crested combers caught the junk astern and caused her to roll heavily from side to side. I wanted to slow down but couldn't. We were being driven straight toward the island of

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

Tutuila, practically out of control, and yet, to save ourselves and ship from disaster, we had to pass through the narrow entrance to Pago Pago Bay with its treacherous reefs and wild seas offshore. I was afraid we would get there before daylight, and in that wind I could not have tacked back and forth offshore. I had to make the harbor entrance and I did not have much time to make the decision. I could only hope that daylight would arrive soon enough to enable me to find our way in. We were in a strange race indeed. There was no sleep that night for either of us. I had to fight the tiller, when the huge waves threw the junk forward, to keep her headed on course, else we might have swung broadside to the sea, or, worse still, jibed. Sometime near midnight, a sudden violent roll of the junk threw me heavily against the bulwark, causing a severe pain in my right side. Breathing was painful and I was afraid I had broken a rib. Tani handled the tiller a moment while I took stock of the situation. Any movement caused me agony but move I had to; there was no going below that night.

Weary hours dragged by as we peered ahead into the murky night. Then, at three A.M., I saw the flashing light on the north-eastern tip of Tutuila Island. An hour later I could see the light at the harbor entrance dead ahead. Anxiously I gazed at the eastern horizon. The darkness was fading! Daylight was coming! With good visibility my way was clear. Six o'clock found the junk racing past the booming reefs at the narrow harbor entrance. We swept past the *U. S. S. Ontario*, moored at a wharf inside, and noticed how startled were the men aboard her. An officer rushed to the rail with a megaphone. "Where you from?" he shouted.

"Los Angeles," I called back. I could see he didn't believe me. We dropped anchor off the administration building. We had covered some eighteen hundred miles in twenty-one days. Good sailing, but, oh, how rough!

We received a shock when the port captain boarded us to inform me that Pago Pago was a closed defense area and I should not have entered. It was lucky for us that no one had seen us entering the harbor, for we might have been warned off with a shot. The port captain added that the ruling had been passed while we were at sea, therefore we could stay to load stores before



## A CLOSED PORT AGAIN

proceeding. This ruling was bad news for me, as I had planned on giving the junk a good overhauling in Pago Pago. After the doctor and the customs men had been aboard, we were officially in. The port captain had us towed up close to the Navy boatshed. The smooth water there made an excellent anchorage for us, as the shed protected the junk from strong squalls that swept down the bay from the famous Rainmaker Mountain. The man who towed us into the new anchorage was Chief Boatswain's Mate Richter. This man, with long years of service in the Navy, was very friendly and helpful to us during our stay in Pago Pago. We both hope to meet him again someday. But the world has taken such a plunge since those pleasant days that we wonder now what has happened to him.

We were just relaxing from the strenuous night and the confusion of entering port, sitting out on deck to look at our surroundings, when a motor launch pulled alongside. A Marine officer and a lady climbed aboard, smiling.

"I'm Colonel Dessez," the officer said, extending his hand. "This is Mrs. Dessez. I was just reading your story in a copy of *The Rudder* when someone told me a Chinese junk had come in. We rushed right out. I never imagined I would be meeting you two here!"

Pago Pago harbor is formed from the crater of an extinct volcano. The sea flowed through a narrow opening in the eastern wall at some ancient time to form the lovely bay. Samoa receives plenty of rain and the luxuriant vegetation contrasts with the parched-appearing Marquesas Islands. We enjoyed sitting on the deck of our good ship just looking around at the garden spot in which we found ourselves. Every morning the Fita Fita band and color guard marched to the administration building for the daily flag-raising ceremony. The Fita Fitas, a sort of native constabulary, are all big, handsome fellows dressed in white blouses, navy blue *lava-lavas* trimmed with red, and cocky little red caps. They were a very well-trained and colorful group.

It was the first American community we had encountered since leaving Balboa and we enjoyed it. We drank innumerable rich malted milks. Meat was cheap and good. Pimi gnawed contentedly on huge bones. There was good bread, cookies and

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

doughnuts, pickled pigs' feet, peanut butter, mayonnaise; all those things and more that we had been unable to buy for a long while. Americans are variety eaters. You don't realize that until you get away from home.

The naval personnel at Pago Pago nearly killed us with kindness. We were invited out to dinner or luncheon nearly every day of our stay. We spent an enjoyable evening with the Dessezes the first night in. We went over to the C. P. O.'s mess for lunch on two occasions, once with Richter and another time with Bassch. When I saw what those chiefs had to eat, I did not wonder at the size of them. The platters of fried chicken, the ice cream and cake, well, we still think of those lunches at the C. P. O.'s mess. Many and many a time since then, we've wished we had some of that food with us. We had dinner with Lieutenant and Mrs. Dow; with Chaplain and Mrs. Redman; and, at the Officers' Club, cocktails and supper with Mr. and Mrs. Shelton; dinner with the Hirns at the famous Sadie Thompson's; dinner at the Marine Officers' mess; dinner with the Groats; and luncheon with the Merrits. We had lunch on board the *U. S. S. Ontario* with Lieutenant and Mrs. Mayer. A young naval officer, I can't remember his name, worse luck, loaned me a white coat, so Tani and I attended a dance at the Officers' Club. We had a great time. I also gave two travel talks while in Pago Pago, one at the Marine camp and the other at the local movie house.

From the foregoing one might think we spent most of our time eating and drinking. Unfortunately that was not the case. The junk was leaking badly and I did not like going any farther until I had a look at the bottom. I received permission from the captain of the yard to put the junk up on a small strip of beach near our anchorage. Chief Richter and two Samoan sailors gave me a hand and we towed the junk into shallow water. The beach was supposed to be free from rocks but when the tide went out the junk settled down on a sharp unnoticed rock that punched a hole in the bottom. Water poured into the cabin and Tani and I began to bail frantically. We soon saw that it was useless so we hurriedly dragged all of the gear out of the cabin. Richter noticed that something was wrong and sent over some men. With four men bailing, the water was kept down and the junk moved up

## *A CLOSED PORT AGAIN*

off the rock and rested on her side in the sand. A lead and canvas patch was nailed on from the inside as the hole was impossible to reach from the outside unless the junk was on a slipway. After the patch was in place a heavy layer of cement was poured over the whole area. When the cement set, the leak was fairly well sealed, but the bilge continued to fill from other places. The junk would need to be hauled up on a slipway and that meant sailing the sixty-odd miles to Apia. We would have to chance sailing that distance in the patched and leaking ship.

It was near the end of our stay in Pago Pago that we attended a High Chief's feast in the village of Fagasa on the western side of Tutuila. The party was in honor of Larry Coleman, a Samoan who had just returned from school in the United States. We were guests of Commander Darby. Our group left Pago Pago about one-thirty in the afternoon in a Navy shoreboat. The trip around to the other side of the island was exciting because Tani and I had no responsibility in the running of the boat. We enjoyed that rare feeling of being passengers without navigation worries. The rocky, rugged eastern coast of Tutuila is beaten by the prevailing southeasterly weather and blue Pacific swells crashing against the worn rocks in clouds of white spray. There are caves where the waves boom like big guns, and air holes through the rocks where geysers spurt upward with every heave of the sea. We saw the Rock of the Turtle and the Shark, where, according to Samoan legend, these two creatures will appear if you sing to them from this rock at the full of the moon. At the southern end and western side of Tutuila we saw delightful bays in romantic settings of blue water, white beaches, and graceful coconut palms against a background of eye-soothing green. My thoughts then drifted to shipwrecked sailors and brown South Sea maidens.

About mid-afternoon, we anchored close inshore in lovely Fagasa Bay, where we found most of the village people gathered on the beach to welcome us. Paddles flashed as canoes raced out from shore. Three powerfully built young men, solidly tattooed from the waist to the knees, paddled us into shallow water and then carried us, one by one, onto dry land as easily as though we were babies. One of the lesser chiefs of the village greeted our party. Swarms of naked and half-naked youngsters crowded around as

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

we were slowly escorted to the guest *fale*. On the ground in front of this house, a great feast had been laid out on a matting of fresh banana leaves, protected from the sun's rays by a canopy of palm fronds. A number of young girls stood around waving huge banana leaves to keep the flies from the food, which was already in place. In front of the *fale* we met the High Chief and the High Talking Chief. The former was a huge handsome man wrapped in a fine tapa *lava-lava* with an end thrown over one shoulder like a Roman toga. His close-cropped hair and mustache were whitened with lime. In one hand he held a white horsehair fly-switch and with the other he leaned on a magnificently carved cane. Our party shook hands with the two chiefs and a number of lesser chiefs and their wives. Slim dancing girls came up to hang flower leis around our necks. Then we were motioned inside the *fale*.

The Samoan *fale* is probably the best type of house in the South Seas, and is a work of art. It is circular in shape, consists of one room, and is open all the way around. Mat curtains can be dropped on all sides during rainy or windy weather. The elaborately woven-and-tied, pointed roof, made of palm fronds and fibers, is constructed first and then placed on top of the poles that support it. These consist of three thick round timbers in the center, and a great number of smaller timbers around the outer edge. The floor is covered with small clean pebbles over which a layer or two of mats are laid.

This guest *fale* was decorated with flowers and the poles were wound with waxy-white, freshly cut strips of bark. We grouped ourselves in a great circle on the soft mats with our legs crossed. It is considered bad manners in Samoa to stretch your legs out in front of you. In case you can't cross your legs, you must cover them with a mat. The Talking Chief started the ceremonies by giving a welcome address which was replied to by Larry Coleman, the guest of honor. This was all carried on in Samoan. Each guest was then presented with a small piece of the dried kava root, a symbol of good fortune. When a large, round, many-legged wooden bowl was brought in, we knew the kava ceremony was to begin. A young girl draped in a soft tapa cloth took her place beside the bowl facing our party. She was the Taupou (the village

## A CLOSED PORT AGAIN

virgin, usually the Chief's daughter) and the one who would mix the kava. Another girl placed the dried, powdered kava root in the bowl and then added water. When this was done, she handed the Taupou a small bundle of coconut fibers with which she began to mix and strain the kava and water. She paused frequently to toss the bundle of fibers to the girl standing behind her, who shook out the debris and handed it back. Finally the kava was mixed, strained and ready. The Chief began a chant and then suddenly called out the name of the first man to receive the carved half coconut shell of kava, the highest-ranking man getting the first cup, and so on, till all were served. The man who passed the kava cup did it with a great flourish. Scooping up some, he waited for the name to be called, then he stepped before that individual and, bending low, handed him the cup. The honored guest poured a little of the liquid on the floor, said *manuia* and quaffed down the slightly astringent drink. A few drops were then tossed outside of the *fale* and the cup was handed back.

After the kava ceremony was finished, our hosts led us outside to the feast. Sitting cross-legged on mats spread on the ground, I gazed hungrily at the strange food before me. Not all of it could I eat. Not the huge slabs of half-cooked pork. I tackled a mound of various shaped raw mollusks, which I didn't mind, but the little creatures were incredibly tough. I passed next to a variety of small fish, baked in leaves, and some crayfish, all of which were delicious. There was roast chicken and, of course, plenty of baked taro. This root is to the Samoan what bread is to Americans. The custom is to eat with your fingers, and our party did not lag behind the Samoans. I was wondering what to do with the half-cooked pork and the raw mollusks until I noticed that the Samoans had provided for this. Small boys with plaited palm leaf baskets hovered about the chewing guests. Any food that was not wanted was passed to these boys who rushed off with baskets bulging with pork, taro and mollusks. They would take these home to their families to be cooked and eaten. In this way all in the village actually shared in the feast. When all had eaten their fill, we again sat in the *fale* to watch the Samoan *siva-siva*.

Twelve teen-age girls with ginger blossoms in their black hair

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

and flower leis around their necks, wearing short skirts made of green palm leaves that glistened with oil, took their places in the center of the *fale*. Formerly, the girls wore nothing above the waist but these girls wore brassieres; however, this did not spoil the charm of their dance—not really. There was no music, but time was kept by an old woman striking two sticks on a hollow block of wood. She supplemented this at times by chanting. The *siva-siva* is an interpretive dance. The motions of the dancers depict various events in their daily lives such as paddling a canoe, grating coconuts, or feeding chickens. The action is limited almost entirely to the hands and arms, while changing facial expressions help to tell the story. Some acted the part of boys and danced around their partners with arms outstretched, and making a hissing sound, which reminded me a good deal of the mating dance of the gannet.

Presently, from one end of the *fale*, the Taupou, the village virgin, entered. Dozens of leis hung around her neck and her slender body was draped with a "fine mat" *lava lava*. Let me explain here that these special mats are woven so fine that they are as soft and pliable as cloth. The weaving of a fine mat is an extremely tedious and difficult job. They are highly treasured among the Samoans and are only used on festive occasions. Dancing with subdued gestures and downcast eyes, the Taupou advanced to the center of the *fale*. Apparently, this was a signal for the other dancers to go through all sorts of wild antics. They whirled around the Taupou, who remained swaying gently in one spot. They hissed, they leaped high in the air, they clapped their hands. Leaves began to fall from their skirts, their brassieres slipped, and their bodies glistened with moisture. Suddenly the clickety-clack of the dance mistress's sticks stopped and the girls sank cross-legged to the mats. It was time for evening prayers. In the midst of their festivities the Samoans had not forgotten that. The Chief intoned the prayer and the others joined in the responses. From nearby *fales* came sounds of other groups also saying their prayers. After a few minutes, the dancing was resumed.

Word went around our party that the Chief had requested each male guest to do some sort of a dance. This is an old Samoan custom of showing appreciation for the hospitality of your host.

## A CLOSED PORT AGAIN

We had to be told, but Samoans will get up and dance any time, as dancing is a means of expression with them. The Samoans certainly enjoyed our efforts. They rolled on the floor with laughter. Two of the dancing girls would converge upon an embarrassed male and, with gestures and laughter, entice him to rise and dance. There were some wonderful versions of the *siva-siva* danced by members of our party. Imagine a motion picture of long-legged me shaking and wiggling over the mats in that *fale* while the brown girls leaped and whirled around me.

Speeches ended this most interesting evening. The Samoans are noted for their oratory. The fact that they have talking chiefs, whose main duty is orating, shows the importance they place upon this art. I was sorry I could not understand what the Talking Chief said that night. Larry Coleman replied for our party. After shaking hands with our Samoan hosts, we left the *fale*. The Commander went back in the shore boat while the rest of us took a trail over the ridge to Pago Pago.

On June 26, 1941, we were towed out of beautiful Pago Pago. Colonel and Mrs. Dessez, Mrs. Groat and Mrs. Brindly went along in the shore boat to see us off. Once outside of the entrance, we dropped our tow and I hauled up the sails. The power boat circled us once as we waved good-by. Mrs. Dessez was busy taking motion pictures. Our stay in Pago Pago had been short but very sweet. We will long remember the hospitality of the people.





## *CHAPTER* **XII**



## *"You Will Sail to Honolulu"*

AT TWO THE NEXT MORNING, I PICKED UP THE LIGHT ON THE southeastern end of Upolu Island. The junk was leaking badly and we bailed five times that night. Luckily the weather was calm. Daylight found us sailing close to a green shore, looking for Apia. It was one of those bright sunny mornings when we were glad to be alive and, in spite of our leaky craft, we were in good spirits.

I did not have a chart of Apia harbor, but I knew it was encircled by breaking reefs. About midday, I saw a cluster of buildings on shore and the long arms of a reef running out from the beach. I steered in close and skirted along the reef, looking for the entrance. When we came to an open stretch of water, I steered in. Tani took the tiller while I stood in the bow directing her, for the channel between the reefs curved, and I wasn't sure that we were in the right passage. To my left I saw the rusting skeleton of one of the victims of the great typhoon of 1899. I lowered the mainsail and the junk moved ahead under the foresail. Near the main wharf, our anchor rattled over the side. We had arrived in Apia, British Samoa. That was my first experience of sailing through coral reefs.

We sat on deck for a while, looking over the scene. The first

sight of a strange port is always exciting. The small town of Apia stretched along the beach, a fringe of weather-beaten buildings following the curve of the shore line. A clock tower was the most prominent object, a modern reminder of the time, sounding its pleasant chimes in a sleepy community. Back of the town, lazy green hills stretched away into the distance. It is this wider range of view, I believe, that makes Apia a more picturesque spot than Pago Pago. Anchored near us were a number of the small inter-island motor vessels, some of which we had seen at Pago Pago. They carried passengers, freight and produce among the various islands of the Samoan group.

Our scenery gazing came to an end when a rowboat pulled alongside the junk and we were boarded by the harbormaster and pilot. He was a small dour-faced individual with a large nose and his name was McClymont. His attitude was decidedly chilly and it was somewhat of a shock to me. Perhaps I had insulted his position by sailing in without his expert help, for his first words were, "You should not have come in without a pilot." My travels have revealed the sensitive nature of harbor officials, particularly pilots. I endeavored to warm this particular bit of chilled humanity by telling him of our travels and why I had put into Apia. He would not thaw out completely, but he pointed to a small slipway and said I could put the junk up there. When the doctor and the police inspector arrived, the harbormaster left. Dr. Skinner was a young, cheery New Zealander who finished his work quickly. His pleasant way was a decided contrast to the dour harbormaster, but then he was only a doctor. Inspector Braisby of the Apia police was a friendly man we will always remember. I suppose of all the friends we made in Apia, the Inspector was the most helpful. He had spent many years in America and knew and liked the country. He was a crack shot with both rifle and revolver. I later attended rifle matches with him and was startled to see how he could pump bullets right into the center of a bull's eye time after time.

Early on the day following our arrival, the harbormaster came out in a launch to say that the junk could go up on the slipway immediately. My suggestions that it would be better to unload the ballast and water first did not meet with his approval. He in-

## *"YOU WILL SAIL TO HONOLULU"*

sisted she would go up as she was. His launch towed us into shallow water off the slipway, where Solomon Island boys, who worked for the government, swam out to guide the junk to shore. The slipway cradle was run down the tracks as far as it could go. The tide was full, but in spite of all the heaving and tugging, the junk would not fit into the cradle. She was too deep in the water. I had the boys move her to a nearby wharf, where we began a mad scramble to unload all the heavy gear. The black boys sweated and strained, Tani and I were doing a dozen different jobs, and, on the wharf, round, smiling Captain Anderson urged us to greater efforts. "Hurry up! Hurry up! Come on! The tide will turn soon!" The junk was being stripped; off went the mainsail complete with boom, three anchors and chain, barrels of water and much loose but heavy gear up forward. The junk was pulled back to the slip but by then the tide was going out and there was no chance of getting her on the cradle. There was nothing to do but pick up one of our anchors and go back to the anchorage. We had struggled all day to do a job, without success, which we could have accomplished easily had we first removed the heavy gear and ballast, as I had wanted to do. But worse was yet to come.

Early the next morning we were paid another visit by the harbormaster. He was in a surly mood. "You can't go up on the slipway," was his first startling remark. "You will have to leave Apia in three days." I told him the junk had a hole in the bottom and that I could not put to sea before repairs were made. I asked him to inspect the junk himself. He stalked around in a rage. "I am the naval authority here," he shouted. "What I say you will do. It is no concern of mine what condition your ship is in. You will have to leave. You should not have come in here." My mind flashed back to Pago Pago where certain responsible people had told me Apia was the place I should go for repairs. I was getting angry but luckily I controlled myself, for I would have liked nothing better than to have dumped that discourteous little rascal overboard, naval authority or not. I held my tongue and, finally, McClymont left. I told Tani I would never leave until I had repaired my ship. On that point I would fight.

I went ashore immediately to call on Inspector Braisby and laid

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

the whole story before him. He advised me to write a letter to the administrator, Mr. Turnbull, explaining my position. I wrote the letter, protesting against the attitude of the harbormaster and explaining why I needed repairs, and took the letter to Mr. Turnbull. I sent the letter in first and, after he had read it, he called me into his office and I told him my story. He wanted to know why I did not stay in Pago Pago to have the junk repaired. I explained that there was not a suitable slipway and that I had been advised to come to Apia. Mr. Turnbull then asked me why I did not go back to Pago Pago. The conversation was getting extremely complicated and we were getting nowhere. I asked Mr. Turnbull to wire the governor general at Pago Pago and find out what was to be done with me. I had another talk with Inspector Braisby and told him that I did not like the situation, but he said not to worry.

A few days later, I received a message to call at the administrator's office. McClymont was there, still suspicious, but not quite so antagonistic as previously. Mr. Turnbull showed me a cable from the governor general of Pago Pago. The message stated that I had been in Pago Pago and could not return. McClymont and Turnbull took full advantage of this by saying, "You see, your own people don't care about you."

"But wait," I spoke up. "Pago is a closed port and, anyhow, they have no facilities for repairing my junk. Apia is not a closed port and you do have a slipway here."

After a momentary silence, Mr. Turnbull said they would allow me ten days to repair my junk. But they would not allow me to put it up on the government slipway (the one I had tried to get on and the only one in Apia). I would have to hire a native ship-builder to roll the junk up on a beach.

After I left the office, I walked about two miles along the beach to a small shipyard. A half-caste Samoan in charge said he could do the job and that he would be around the next day to look over the junk. On the way back to town, I met McClymont, who told me to put the junk up on the government slipway. I hope the reader will not get the impression that Apia is a madhouse because of the antics of this man.

There were other problems. We could not live on the junk

## "YOU WILL SAIL TO HONOLULU"

while it was on the slipway. We had to find a place to stay and a place to store all the stuff we had aboard. While searching for a place to live, we met Joseph, a big Samoan boy of about seventeen. He approached me on the street wearing a long *lava-lava*, a white shirt, and a battered, once white, sun helmet. He took off his helmet. "My name is Joseph," he said. "I am an American and I want to work for you. When I saw the American flag on your boat I was so happy I wanted to shoot [salute] it!"

Joseph was born in Pago Pago so he called himself an American. He was studying at a mission school and hoped to become a village pastor some day. At present, he was on vacation and in need of a job. I needed another hand, so Joseph joined our work crew. I was never sorry about my choice, for he was an exceptional lad. I asked him once why he hadn't stayed in Pago Pago and joined the Fita-Fita, where he could make good money, instead of studying to be a minister. He gazed at me seriously for a moment and then said, "I do not care for material things. I seek the everlasting life."

The manager of one of the local firms rented us a house situated near the waterfront. A great two-story building it was, although we only used the upper floor. The building was formerly a German club known as the Concordia. One of the rooms was being used by a group of local strong men, weight lifters, who met once a week. We had plenty of room and we let them continue with their grunting and straining. We didn't lack for space, for after we had moved in all of our gear from the junk, including the bed, stove, and Pimi, there were still great vacant areas. The spacious front room, that was our combined bedroom, dining room and living room, had once been the main lounge of the club. The ship's gear, such as paint, rope, canvas, tools and all the rest of it, was stored in another room. A long hallway led to the back of the building where there was a kitchen. Here Tani set up our kerosene stove. Adjacent to the kitchen was a toilet and a shower, but no hot water. However the weather was warm in Samoa and we didn't mind.

Pimi had the time of her life. From the cramped quarters of the junk to the vast Club Concordia was indeed a change for her. She raced through the rooms, skidding around corners, while we

wondered where she got all the energy. Huge rats, that evidently resented our presence in their castle, gave Pimi added exercise. She never caught one but she tried hard enough. At night when we were in bed and all was dark throughout the great house, I could almost imagine I heard long-since-departed guests moving about the rooms, and sounds of clinking glasses, music and deep guttural voices. But we were snug when the torrential rains came down, and the wind howled outside, snug and happy in Castle Petersen—no sheets to tighten, no sails to lower, all night below in a warm dry bunk. What sailor could want more!

Shortly after our arrival, a tall skinny Samoan, dressed in a dirty *lava-lava*, visited the junk to sell curios. He was a persistent fellow and kept coming back day after day. When Joseph and I tied the junk up to the wharf to unload ballast, the dock above us was crowded with waterfront loafers, among them this thin man. He asked for a job, as did another Samoan. Unloading the iron ballast was a difficult job so I hired the two at an agreed price. Presently one of them struck for higher pay. When I refused to pay him more, he quit, but the curio seller stayed on. He did little work and spent most of his time joking with the loafers who watched us from the dock. Joseph called me aside and said, "That man, not a good man. We must be careful." I was down in the cabin digging out some blocks of iron when I heard a great commotion outside. I stepped out on the afterdeck. The thin man, as a joke, I suppose, had grabbed Pimi and had thrown her up onto the wharf. She became frightened and, in trying to jump back onto the junk, fell into the water between the junk and the wharf. Picking up the first object that came to my hand, a hatchet, I grabbed the Samoan by the neck. "Get that dog!" I shouted. "If she drowns, I'll kill you." He started to move toward the side of the ship, but, in a split second, Joseph had dived overboard and our dripping pup was tossed on deck. But I didn't see anything of Joseph. Suddenly he crawled aboard on the other side of the junk, having swum underneath. Needless to say, I fired the thin Samoan immediately.

Later, down in the cabin, Joseph said, "Patience, Dr. Petersen, patience." While we were eating dinner that evening, I asked Joseph why he jumped over after Pimi.



## "YOU WILL SAIL TO HONOLULU"

"When I heard you say you are going to kill that man if Pimi drowns, I jump over after Pimi," he said seriously. "I did not want a man to be killed." He had taken my outburst literally.

When the junk was unloaded, she floated easily onto the cradle, and, with the black boys heaving on the winch, she was soon out of the water. Her bottom planks were in a terrible shape. Tore-does had honeycombed the new planks put on in Peru. Captain Anderson, who had charge of the government docks and boats, was extremely helpful. He recommended a very good carpenter who, with his son as helper, made all the necessary repairs in two weeks' time. Two coats of copper paint were put on the bottom before the junk was slid back in the water. Meanwhile, we spread out the mainsail and foresail inside a large boat shed and made all the necessary repairs. The ten day limit which had been imposed on us had passed, but, before that had happened, the harbor-master took a trip to New Zealand. Captain Anderson became acting harbor-master. I called on the administrator again and he told me to stay until the necessary repairs were finished.

I didn't hear one person in Apia say a good word for McClymont. He had had arguments with ship captains also. On the other hand, everyone liked Captain Anderson. He was a capable, efficient, energetic man. What puzzled me was who appointed a man like McClymont when a worthwhile man like Captain Anderson should have had the job. The answer is political, I suppose. Let us hope the world will soon see the end of such "old school tie" diplomacy and the right men will be put in the right jobs.

Alain Gerbault had passed through that part of the Pacific just before us. He had been in Pago Pago and also in Apia. Some of the good people of the latter port did not like his habit of going ashore barefooted and clad only in a *lava-lava*. They feared it lowered the white man's prestige in the eyes of the natives. I do not believe this to be true, for the important thing, I think, is to set an example for the natives. Dress does not make the man, but character and discipline do. For instance, McClymont did not think I should work on my junk while it was up on the slipway. The natives should not see white men dirty and doing hard work. This is an antiquated colonial idea, but it is very

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

strong with certain types of people. But to go back to Gerbault. He left Port Moresby shortly after we arrived in Papua. The authorities said he was heading for Indo-China but he only reached Timor. Months later I heard that he had died at Timor sometime in December, 1942. And so another small-boat sailor had embarked upon the long, silent voyage.

Western Samoa used to be a German colony and there were Germans living there until World War II started, when they were sent to New Zealand and interned. The main white population of Apia now is New Zealanders, with a sprinkling of other nationalities. We met many likable people in Apia and made some good friends. Mrs. Braisby gave Tani a tea at which most of the local ladies were present. We went to yacht races and on picnics. We enjoyed an interesting day at the Mediki plantation and saw, for the first time, cocoa in the natural state. It was surprising to learn that one of the serious pests of this plant are rats. They climb the trees and eat the inside out of the cocoa pods. Mrs. Mediki served us a delicious meal, not the least part of which was homemade bread. On another occasion, we visited the hospital and saw the good work the doctors were doing there. Dr. Skinner and Dr. Neuman were particularly nice to us. To show our appreciation for Apia's hospitality, I gave a benefit talk for the New Zealand Red Cross. There was a good attendance, including the governor and his lady, and all enjoyed hearing the story of our travels.

A pretty half-caste child named Mary adopted us during our stay. Each morning she brought us a huge bouquet of flowers and stayed to help Tani. We asked her to eat with us, but she was such a shy little thing, Joseph had to urge her to eat. He adopted a big-brother attitude toward her and they got along well. We always boiled plenty of taro and had plenty of bananas for these two. Taro is the Samoan's staff of life, and next on his food list is the banana. All Samoans can dance, and Mary and Joseph were no exception. One would not think that great Joseph could get his feet off of the floor, but he was a light and graceful dancer. The *siva-siva* that Mary and Joseph did was simple, natural and yet fascinating. One evening a group of young Samoans called to entertain us with an evening of dancing and singing. Their musi-

## *"YOU WILL SAIL TO HONOLULU"*

cal instruments were homemade coconut-shell ukeleles and five-gallon empty gasoline tins. When it came time for them to leave, Joseph, assuming the mantle of talking chief, gave out with a half-hour thank-you oration.

Once Joseph saw in our album a picture of a girl wearing a fur coat. Knowing he had never seen a fur coat before, I asked him what he thought of the picture. He replied, "Oh, she is beautiful like an animal." He proved to be such a trustworthy, efficient worker, I decided to take him with us on the junk, if he would go. A broad grin came over his face when I mentioned it. "I want very much to go with you, Dr. Petersen," he said, then added seriously, "but I do not want to just work for you, I want to go as your son." I told him that I would indeed treat him as a son and watch out for him, but I impressed upon him the importance of thinking over the step he would be taking. I did not want to urge him to go by glowing tales of other islands; he must make up his own mind. He said his mind was made up but he would have to ask his widowed mother and brothers. At the end of the week, he left for his village, full of enthusiasm and excitement, to consult his people. The following Monday morning he was back, forlorn and with his head hanging.

"I am a very poor talking chief," he said, "for not one of my family wants me to go." Then he broke down and cried. Family means everything in Samoa, and a boy like Joseph would not go against their wishes. There was a selfish motive on the part of the family, I suspected, for, when Joseph finished his mission training, he would be placed in a village as its native minister. The villagers would furnish him with a house and supply him and his family with food.

From Apia I had planned on sailing to Port Moresby, New Guinea. I found that there were at least two obstacles connected with this plan that I had not foreseen. One was that I could not buy or borrow any charts of the ocean and lands to the westward. Neither could I buy or borrow a pilot book. The other obstacle I encountered when I called at the customs house for my clearance papers. The papers were made out for Honolulu. "Honolulu?" I said vacantly. "But I'm going to Port Moresby!"

"We can't give you a clearance to any other British port," said

## *HUMMEL HUMMEL*

the man at the desk. "You can't return to Pago Pago, and Honolulu is the nearest American port."

Off I rushed to see Administrator Turnbull. He was very curt and to the point. Honolulu was the only port they would clear me to. Argument was useless so I left him, choking back a lot of words I wanted to say. Later, I wrote a letter to the governor general of Pago Pago, telling him of the situation, pointing out that adverse winds and currents would make it almost impossible for me to reach Honolulu in the type of craft I was sailing. That letter was a waste of paper and energy, for I heard nothing from him.

*CHAPTER* **XIII**



## *Storm at Sea*

THREE DAYS PREVIOUS TO SAILING DAY, THE JUNK WAS MOORED AT the wharf and Joseph, his brother John, and I worked and sweated getting the ballast aboard. I rigged up the sails and rove all the halyards. All of our gear from the various storage places was taken aboard. Pimi had to get used to cramped quarters again. We bought all our food supplies and had our barrels filled with fresh water. Early on the morning of sailing day, gifts from the people of Apia began to arrive. The Medikis sent down a small live pig, which Tani promptly named Porky. Mr. Paul sent over four large stalks of bananas. Other friends came with papayas, limes, lime juice, coconuts, cakes, cookies, and jars of homemade jam. The junk was completely and fully loaded. The forecastle was so crowded with a variety of goods that I could just barely get down into it. There was slightly more room in the main cabin. At ten in the morning, the launch that was to tow us out beyond the reefs came alongside. That had been arranged by genial Captain Anderson, who was among those to see us off. People leaned down from the wharf to shake hands. "Well, Joseph," I asked, for he had made no move to leave the junk, "what have you decided to do?" Tears were streaming down his

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

face. Silently then he shook hands with Tani and me and leaped onto the wharf. The last rope was cast off and we were on our way. The folks on the wharf shouted "good-by," and "good luck." There was a confusion of waving hands and handkerchiefs, smiling faces and sad faces. The junk, under tow, moved away from the wharf rapidly. So on July 28, 1941, we were leaving Samoa, a land of fine people, in spite of a few pompous officials. As we faced the open sea, the song we heard was the wind sweeping through the swaying coconut palms, and the surf drumming rhythmically on the roof. "*Tofa, My Papalangi.*" Yes, *tofa*, Samoa, we will never forget you.

The first night out was gusty with frequent rain squalls, but the next day dawned clear and sunny with a moderate easterly breeze. Tani and I, and Pimi and Porky, were all droopy that first day. In our case at least, that feeling was probably due to the thought that we were now gypsies of the sea. I had clearance papers to a port we could not reach. My only navigation chart was a chart of the entire Pacific Ocean. Large islands were mere dots and small islands and reefs were not even shown. A course to Port Moresby under such circumstances would be dangerous enough, but the long, hard beat to the Hawaiian Islands would be almost impossible. I realized, too, for the first time that the war in Europe was definitely beginning to affect our voyage. Closed ports and a suspicion of travelers made sailing exceedingly difficult. But at that stage of our wanderings, it was easier to keep on than to turn back. We decided, once we were at sea, to follow our original plan of sailing westward. Port Moresby would be our next port of call. We often wonder now what would have happened had we attempted to sail to Honolulu. We might have been blown into the Marshall Islands and we can only guess what would have happened to us then. The Japanese would remember that I had sailed along the coast of Japan and had been in two closed ports there.

The lowered spirits of the two animals could be laid to seasickness. Porky was tied by one leg on the foredeck. He was a mean rascal and very stubborn, but we grew to like him. We knew we would never kill Porky for food. Pimi, being of temperamental Latin blood, was exceedingly jealous of the little pig. We kept



## STORM AT SEA

her off the foredeck but she spent her days impatiently watching Porky. When he would squeal, which was quite often, she would set up an hysterical barking and howling. We had a great time with those two.

On July 30, we sighted Wallis Island some distance away to the northwest. The next day we passed close to Hoorn Island. We lost August 2 when we passed the 180° meridian (the International Date Line) and the day became August 3. Our troubles began.

Shortly before sunset, heavy rain squalls, accompanied by a freshening wind, blew over from the east-southeast. Rough driving waves came up quickly. The wind was astern on the course I was sailing and the junk rolled deeply from side to side. By nine o'clock that night, the wind and the waves were steadily increasing in violence. I decided there was too much danger of running before the storm and hove-to, with just a strip of the mainsail and foresail up and all sheets tightened down. The darkness wrapped itself around us like a blanket; we could not see and had to grope our way about the slippery, wet decks. With the boat moving violently in what seemed like three motions at once, Tani and I tied ourselves to the junk by a length of line. Had one of us gone over the side on that night, there would have been no hope of rescue and the lines around our waists gave us some measure of safety. The wind swept in powerful, shrieking gusts over our wallowing craft, while, from out of the wall of darkness, phosphorescent, gleaming waves rushed upon us. I could swear that all the evil demons of the night were around us, screaming, hissing, roaring for our destruction. Valiantly the staunch junk raised her bulging eyes and flat bow to meet each onslaught. But suddenly she faltered, and then staggered under the smashing impact of a huge wave that smothered the foredeck in glowing, swirling water. Howling a funeral dirge, the demons riding the storm sent walls of water tumbling down on the junk. We were in a battle—our ship against the elements. Tani, courageous girl, stood by the lashed tiller. Grasping a bucket in one hand, I crawled forward, thankful, at least, for the safety afforded by the line that tied me to my ship. I lay on the foredeck with my arms clutching the comforting solid mainmast while I surveyed the

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

scene. I could not see Tani and when I called out to reassure her, the wind greedily stole the words and whipped them out into the night. Wave after wave tore over the bow, flooding the foredeck. Ropes floated about in a tangled, writhing mass like a giant octopus seeking to engulf the little ship. I braced myself against the mast and tried to scoop the water off the deck as it swirled around me. I might just as well have tried to bail out the ocean. A wave smashed open the hatch to the forecabin and the sea poured in. Another wave rose over the bow and crashed along the foredeck, causing the junk to shudder. I clung to the mast gasping for breath as water covered me. Now the junk was awash forward! One bulkhead only kept the water out of the main cabin, but the waves were already threatening that section. I crawled back astern.

"We're sinking forward!" I shouted. "We'll have to try and run before it!"

Our lives depended on getting the submerged bow away from those battering waves. Tani slacked off on the mainsheet, while I put the tiller hard over. We held our breaths for the next few minutes while the water-logged junk, at first failing to answer the helm, slowly fell off from the wind. We then commenced a wild ride that I'll never forget, as the towering waves charged after the junk, caught her, and shot her forward like a surfboard. In spite of the tugging and heaving on the tiller by both of us, we could not keep her from jibbing. The mainsail whipped across the deck, breaking all the bamboo battens and the gaff in an explosive crash that covered the deck with a tangled mass of canvas and lines. I lashed the tiller amidships.

"I'm going to pass the ends of the two anchor lines back to you," I shouted to Tani. "Make them fast on each side and stand clear!"

Once again I crawled forward and reached the safety of the mainmast. At that moment, the foresail carried away and the canvas held by the sheets floated to leeward. We were now without sail and at the mercy of the sea. Choked by salt water that beat down upon me, I reached the chain locker. As I groped about in the water, I heaved a sigh of relief that the heavy anchor lines were still coiled in place and, after what seemed

## STORM AT SEA

hours, I found the two ends. With these looped through the line around my waist, I crawled back. Tani made the lines fast, one to port and one to starboard. Slowly, feeling my way, I checked to see that the lines were clear and securely fastened to each anchor.

"Stand clear!" I yelled, and tumbled the port anchor overboard, and then the starboard one. There were about twenty fathoms of line on each anchor. When the lines tightened the junk swung stern to the wind and sea. Anxious moments followed until we felt the junk riding more easily and noticed that the waves were no longer breaking aboard. Chaffing gear was then wrapped around the lines where they ran over the bulwarks to protect them from the constant friction. Our next job was to get the water out of the forepart of the junk. We emptied the chain locker fairly easily. The bow raised slightly with that and allowed some of the water to run off the deck. The forecastle was a heart-breaking sight. This area, about six by six by five feet, was flooded. Here we had stowed much of the food and gear taken on in Apia. I dipped into a solution of salt water, paint, and oil with my bucket. When the water level dropped, Tani got down into the mess to fill the buckets while I pulled them up on a rope. All our stores were ruined. We had dozens of bottles of water stowed down in the bilge as an emergency supply and most of them had broken. Baskets, bananas, coconuts, dried beans, Samoan mats, rolls of new canvas, papayas, spare blankets, five gallons of Peruvian molasses that had been opened, were submerged or churning about in the paint-laden salt water, for here, too, we had our paint locker. A twenty-five pound tin of ship's biscuits was turned into a sodden mass when the tin was punctured. We bailed until the water was well below the bunks. It was then about four in the morning and we were exhausted. No one can realize how we fought that night, but we had won! Our ship was still afloat. Tani had been wonderful. She worked all through the night under most terrible conditions, yet she didn't complain or express fear. Surely she is a deep-sea sailor equal to the best.

At daybreak, we went below and had a good stiff drink of whiskey. We looked at each other in the gray light of morning and

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

burst out laughing at what we saw. Dripping wet, naked except for shorts, and smeared with oil and paint, we were a couple of tragic clowns. We fell upon our bunks and sank into an exhausted sleep.

I awoke about two hours later and climbed out on deck. The gale was still in full force and a sullen, heavy, unbroken cloud mass hung close overhead. As far as eyes could see, rows of towering white-crested waves rushed onward, as though hurrying to some cataclysmic rendezvous. The junk was riding well. She would go up and then down into the trough as the sea warriors hurried by. They did not seem so eager to destroy us now, as though they had had their chance and, having failed, were now disdainful of us. The junk showed scars of the battle she had been through. The decks were littered with broken bamboo, lines and torn canvas.

I found poor little Porky hanging over the side drowned. I had placed him in his box on the previous evening, but during the night he had gotten out. We both felt sad at the little fellow's tragic ending. When I cut him loose and he drifted astern, I noticed a commotion in the water. Sharks! Evil creatures stealthily following our craft waiting for tragedy to fill their bellies. Angrily I blasted them with my rifle.

There was no sun that day so I could not get a sight, but I believed that my drift was west-northwest. We were so weary that we did little work on that first day. We did finish bailing out the rest of the water in the forecastle, but we could not dry anything because of rain squalls and spray. I managed to get the foresail back aboard and I secured the mainsail. Repairs would have to wait a day or so. Every muscle in our bodies ached and we felt a million years old.

On August 5, I wrote in the log: "Noon—eight days out of Apia. Lat. 14 30'S—Long. 178 52'E by DR. Riding at sea anchor. Wind still strong from the SE. Continuous rain squalls passed over us. A heavy breaking sea running. No sun, sky completely overcast. So far we are still afloat. Everything aboard is wet. It is unbelievably rough. I can only guess where we are. Seems as though the sun has left this part of the world. Poor Pimi doesn't know what to make of it all. She is very frightened. We are bailing

## STORM AT SEA

about three times a day. Trying to go to the toilet out on deck is an ordeal (the toilet below is out of order). It means a thoroughly wet behind every time."

On August 7 I must have been upset, for the log reads: "Riding at sea-anchor. Wind has lessened somewhat but still is gusty. Sea moderating. Sky overcast. Continuous rain squalls. We are still being shaken to pieces. Such gloomy, depressing weather. Rain, rain, and howling winds, and angry seas. Wonder when the weather will change or if it ever will. Taking quite a bit of water in the forward and stern bilge. Started repairing the rigging and sails today. Difficult job when you need two hands to hold on with. Ropes and canvas are sodden wet. A wet drizzle falling most of the time. Absolutely the rottenest weather I've ever seen. Beautiful tropical sailing, warm tropical breezes, starlit nights, glorious sunrises; we have seen mighty little of those beauties. But we've seen plenty of rain, rough seas, gloomy, black, cloud-heavy skies, strong winds, and cold weather ever since we left Peru. Bah! And a couple of phooies on the tropics. Give me the wintry north."

Thinking back to the first night of the storm and the strange way the junk had behaved, I came to the conclusion that maybe the ballast was not trimmed properly. So I moved some of it 'midships and some aft and so lightened her by the head a little. By August 9 the weather had definitely improved. At daylight I started heaving in on the anchors one at a time, on the Spanish windless which serves as a capstan on my junk. It was a back-breaking job, but I finally secured them aboard. At nine o'clock, I hoisted all sail to a gentle easterly breeze and set the course WSW. The sun came out and we covered the junk from one end to the other with gear to dry. We had many more things to put out but there was no more room. I don't believe there was a dry article aboard. More serious was the bursting of the hoops of a ten-gallon water barrel and the loss of the precious fluid. Our experiences in that storm show how a well-stocked ship may suddenly be turned into one of starvation and thirst. Luckily, we had our foodstuffs stored in various parts of the ship so that unless we lost the entire ship we would not lose all of our food. I also had bottles of water stowed throughout the junk. Once again it

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

was proved to me that our junk was an unusual ship. She could take it. Imagine, this same junk was in a vacant lot on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles at one time. Little did I think then that I would be riding out a gale in her in the South Pacific!

The sun stayed out one day and then squally weather began again. An unusual shift of the wind occurred one night. Starting from the southeast, it shifted to the northeast, then to the north and then to the northwest. At that point the skies cleared for a short while. The following morning the wind continued its counter-clockwise motion and blew from the southwest, accompanied by strong rain squalls. Finally, it shifted to the south and increased in force. A rough sea caused the junk to ride badly. I moved some more ballast around, and that seemed to help things considerably. Clothing that had not been dried thoroughly began to mildew, and the continued dampness caused a grayish mold to appear on the walls of the cabin. We wore damp clothes, slept on a damp mattress and were thoroughly miserable, as you can well imagine. During those days I could readily understand how sun worshipping started.

On the first watch after midnight on August 14, Tani called me on deck. She had sighted an island dead ahead and not far off. A heavy cloud bank, that had covered the whole western horizon, suddenly lifted and revealed the island to her startled gaze. Soon we could see the dim outlines of other islands. I could only guess, and it later proved to be correct, that we were among the Banks Islands which lie north of New Hebrides. It was all hands on deck the rest of the night to watch for reefs. I steered south westward along the shore of a large island I later found to be Vanua Lava. Daybreak brought a cold wet drizzle with poor visibility and very little wind. Slowly the junk moved into wide Avreas Bay where I dropped anchor close to the beach. A dank dripping mist shrouded the heavily wooded hills in the back country. Our arrival had been noticed by the islanders and we heard them shouting, but I could only indistinctly see figures under the trees. Some hours later, canoes put off from the beach for our ship and we had our first sight of the interesting Banks Islanders. They were small of stature, of a chocolate brown color and had tight kinky hair. Their faces were pleasant, with eyes that were round

## STORM AT SEA

and bright like a startled child's. Both men and women wore necklaces, arm bands, and ear plugs and were tattooed with a few dots and lines on the left cheek. Three men climbed aboard, shaking and coughing, evidently chilled by the cold drizzle, as they wore only *lava-lavas*. I passed around some cigarettes and they grinned in appreciation but did not speak. The canoes they used were small, poorly constructed outriggers.

Later a wrinkled old man came alongside in his canoe to hand up a small bunch of bananas. In return I gave him some cigarettes and a fish hook. He must have been a vain old fellow, for he wore an inch wide band of small glass beads around his neck while a curved boar's tusk bracelet encircled each arm above the elbow. A small English coin hung from his left ear lobe. He spoke fairly good English and explained he had been a mission boy and had been to Australia. He had also worked on the plantations in the New Hebrides. With many gestures and a toothless grin he related the dangers of working in the New Hebrides where the bush men would now and then *ki-ki* (eat) one of the work boys. He assured me the Banks Island people were all right because they had been taught by the white man's mission. I asked him where the first Banks Islander came from. He said they came from the sun. Next I asked him if he was married. When he said he was, I asked him how many children he had.

"Oh, plenty," he replied.

"One, two, three?" I asked, counting on my fingers.

"One, two, three," he repeated, nodding his head.

"Four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten?" I kept counting.

"Yes," he nodded, "four, five, six, seven—"

"You have plenty children," I interrupted.

"Oh, yes, plenty of children," he replied.

When the old man left, a couple paddled their canoe alongside. One proved to be a young woman, but I had difficulty in telling at first glance. Her tight woolly hair was the same length as that of the man with her. She was tattooed on the left cheek and around her neck was a dog collar of blue glass beads. She wore a torn red blouse-like covering, evidently put on for the visit, and a short red calico skirt that reached to her knees. Her face was rather sweet, with a shy, boyish smile. The usual drizzle was

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

falling and she and her man sat in their canoe soaked and shivering. Those people had not apparently thought of making leaf raincoats, such as the Chinese and Japanese peasants use in rainy weather. We gave this couple a few cigarettes, and when Tani presented the woman with a bracelet she flashed us a white-toothed smile.

We did not go ashore on Vanua Lava and, early on the morning of August 8, we sailed out of Avreas Bay. A drizzle was falling as it had every day we were anchored there, and we were glad to leave that gloomy island with its poor shivering humanity. Strong gusts of wind swept down from the hills and the junk flew out of the bay. I steered northwest by west with the wind from the southeast. At noon Ureparapara Island lay to the northeast of us. Late the next afternoon, we sighted the southernmost island of the Torres group. My navigating was by dead reckoning then, as nearly every day was overcast. In checking on the amount of rainy or cloudy weather we had since leaving Peru, I found the following: from Peru to the Marquesas Islands, forty-four days, with thirty days rain or overcast; from the Marquesas Islands to Pago Pago, twenty-one days, with thirteen days rain or overcast; Apia to Banks Islands, seventeen days, with thirteen days rain or overcast.

Tani sighted low, flat Rennell Island dead ahead at daybreak on August 22. By eight o'clock we were attempting to pass the southeast point of the island. The wind had freshened from the south and a short choppy sea was running. This bad combination of wind and sea prevented my clearing the end of the island without tacking. Rather than waste time doing this, I decided to let our visit to Rennell Island wait until another time. I changed course, and we commenced the run up the coast of the island to pass it on the north. Shortly we were in the lee of the island, and the wind was gentle and the water smooth. With sail lowered to half, the junk leisurely moved ahead close inshore. It was a welcome relaxation from the bouncing we had been taking. Rennell Island is called a raised coral atoll and it is table-flat on top. The whole island is covered with a dense vegetation down to the base of the cliffs facing the sea. Rarely was a spot of white sandy beach to be seen. The contour of the side of the island we were seeing



## STORM AT SEA

was extremely regular, so that one section appeared the same as another. A coral shelf extended outward along the coast.

Presently we sighted a group of huts on a small stretch of beach. I steered the junk in closer. There were eight thatched huts that appeared to be more like doghouses than dwellings, they were so small. We had been sighted, and a group of people stood on the beach pointing at us. Two outrigger canoes, one containing three men and the other, two men, shot out from the beach toward us, the occupants paddling furiously. With the idea of meeting these islanders, I lowered the mainsail and kept headway with the foresail. The canoe with the three men caught up with us and I tossed them a rope. They were well-built men of medium height and of a light brown color. The oldest one had pure Malay features (like a Filipino) and the others appeared a cross between Malay and Polynesian. Their hair was black and curly but not kinky. They wore only grass G-strings. Two of the men had elaborate and accurate tattooing on their chests, arms and legs of fish, and spears. Their ear lobes were pierced but only one wore earrings. Their outrigger canoe was well and carefully made. In the bottom of the canoe lay two steel hatchets, which showed that those people had some connection with civilization. The older of the men jabbered away in some gibberish. Once in a while I could catch what seemed like the English word "Bishop" and "Bishop Ship." We wondered whether they thought the junk was the mission ship and that I was the Bishop. When they spoke their own language, it sounded like Malay to me. I gave each of them some cigarettes and a fish hook, and in return they gave us a few small fish and a couple of shellfish. After taking their pictures, I raised the mainsail and, as the junk picked up speed, the islanders let go of the rope. We were glad to have had an opportunity to see these Rennell Islanders. They were a definite contrast to the poor Banks Islanders. By six o'clock that afternoon we rounded the northwest end of Rennell. We could see Bulona Island in the distance. The wind was moderate from the south. I set the course west by south.



*CHAPTER* **XIV**



## *Shipwreck!*

JUST BEFORE SUNSET ON AUGUST 26, I SIGHTED A HIGH MOUNTAINOUS island to the northwest. My charts of the entire Pacific were of no use to identify that small speck of land. I could only guess it to be Tagula or Sudest Island, which I remembered as being in the southeastern end of the Louisade Archipelago. With this in mind I set a course of due west which would clear us of all land for the night. At Port Moresby I intended picking up supplies before pushing on through Torres Straits.

About one-thirty the next morning while on watch, a peculiar throbbing sound came to my ears which at first I thought might be caused by an airplane or a powerful motorship. The night was fairly calm with a moderate sea and a gentle southerly breeze, but visibility was poor, due to a haze that prevented me from seeing more than a couple of boat lengths ahead. I kept the junk right on course, due west, while I strained my eyes trying to discover the source of the sound that was now stronger. At last, I called Tani up on deck and we both peered out into the velvety night. Suddenly ahead of us appeared a white glowing half circle that stretched out toward us. "Breakers!" I shouted. Now we could see the long phosphorescent breaker line flashing south and

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

southwest of us. The terrifying sound of the sea pounding on that great reef filled the air. Quickly I slacked off the sheet to let the junk fall off from the wind. Anxious, chilling minutes passed and it seemed that we could not pull away from those ghostly arms that reached out for our luckless ship. Then I felt the south wind freshen and noted the phosphorescent tail forming astern. With increasing speed the junk began to move away from disaster! When I could no longer see the breakers, I changed course to north, and when the ominous throbbing had died away I steered northwest. The rest of the night we both sat up, watching and listening for breakers. I was now sailing completely blind as far as knowing our exact position.

The first light of day gave us a shock. Southward less than five miles away lay a mountainous stretch of land. Astern some twenty miles I recognized the island I had sighted the previous evening. Dead ahead and northward were a number of smaller islands. I came to the conclusion, rightly I found out later, that the island astern was Rossel Island and the large one southward, Sudest or Tagula. We were north of Sudest amidst a large group of islands when we should have been south in the open sea. My one chart showed me nothing of this area. I climbed up as high as I could on the junk to study the area ahead.

"It looks all right," I called to Tani. "There appears to be open water between the islands, we'll keep on and sail around the far end of Sudest."

A gentle southerly wind was blowing and the sea was calm. The junk moved along slowly while we studied the scenery of Sudest Island. I mentioned to Tani that those islands had once been inhabited by cannibals and I told her a story I had read. Some fifty or sixty years ago a ship carrying Chinese coolies was wrecked on a reef off Rossel Island. The captain and crew escaped in the ship's boat, but four hundred and seventeen coolies were captured by the natives and eaten.

"Lucky we didn't run on that reef last night," Tani said. "We might have been in the pot by now."

We had proceeded for a couple of miles when we noticed a breaking reef that appeared to stretch from Sudest clear across our path to a small flat island fifteen miles northward. Beyond the

## SHIPWRECK!

reef was a great expanse of green water. I had read somewhere that coral never entirely blocks the flow of ocean currents. There was a current flowing westward here, so there must be an opening through the reef, I argued. The calm weather enabled me to sail along the edge of the coral reef to look for that opening. Looking over the starboard side of the junk, we gazed down many feet into the clear blue water. Over the port side lay a fantastic marine coral garden. Then we saw the opening we had been waiting for: a blue water channel about one hundred feet wide that twisted and turned its way through the greenish brown water over the coral reef. I moved the tiller and the junk glided into the narrow passage. All went well for the first few hundred yards until we came to a sharp hairpin bend in the waterway. To round such a point meant tacking but in the narrow space we could not get a proper run to do this. The junk would come up into the wind and that's as far as we would go; so, fearing to be swept onto the reef, I would let her fall off again. After a couple of tries, I turned the junk around and sailed out of the channel. We were now faced with the necessity of sailing back and trying to find the entrance through which we had come in to this maze of reefs. We soon found that the current was stronger than we had expected, and after a few hours of tacking we had made so little progress that I swung the junk around and headed again for the blue water passage. But, as before, the hairpin bend stopped us and I was forced to turn back. The sun was setting by this time and I decided to spend the night trying to tack out of that pocket among the islands. A great part of the reef bordering the area was just under the surface, without breakers to show its presence. So, before darkness set in, I timed our passage from one reef to the other. It took us twenty minutes to complete the distance. After dark, we sailed back and forth, tacking every fifteen minutes by the clock. In this manner we could keep ourselves midway between the reefs.

It was a tiring job and we thought daylight would never come. When at last we could get our bearings, we found we had made little progress for our night's work. To add to our troubles, with sunrise a half gale started blowing from the southeast. It whipped around and down from one of the high mountains on Sudest to

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

catch the junk head on. A short, breaking sea came up almost immediately. We fought this head wind and confused sea till midday when I saw that we were getting nowhere fast. In fact we were losing ground. I decided to have another try at the blue water channel. Although the mainsail was cut down to half, the force of the wind swept the junk forward and before I knew it we were at the hairpin turn. I attempted to tack, the junk came up in the wind and hung there with sails flapping and the current swept her onto the coral reef! I dropped all sail immediately and threw an anchor onto the coral.

Sudest Island was about six miles away at this time and, through the binoculars, I could see a small wharf and a white house up on a hill. That night I blinked out an SOS with the flashlight time and again but saw no lights of any kind ashore. The next day, the wind was still blowing strongly and, although we were not on a breaking reef, the movement of the water caused the junk to grind into the coral. I tried wedging heavy planks between coral and hull, but these were soon ground to bits. Down in the cabin, the sounds were terrible to hear and I would run up on deck again trying to figure out some way to save our gallant ship. I cursed that beautiful coral garden around our bow whose tinted spires and turreted castles bit into the soft belly of our ship like steel borers. Our stern hung over a deep blue abyss and around us swam gaudy tropical fish whose beauty, under the circumstances, we could not appreciate. On the second day a ragged hole was punched in the bottom near the bow.

With the rising water in the bilge, we were forced to carry all movable gear up on deck. The morning of the fourth day dawned calm and we decided to attempt rowing to the island. Tani packed two kerosene tins with our papers, revolvers, bottle of water, a few crackers and two cans of pork and beans. Pimi was left behind, as the small, not-too-good dinghy was already overcrowded.

As we looked shoreward from the junk, the distance did not seem so great, but the channel twisted and turned so much that, after an hour of steady rowing, we were still a long way from shore. Currents, counter currents, tide rips, eddies and a freshening wind were all working against my best efforts. Tani served



## SHIPWRECK!

beans and crackers on the way, taking time out from her job of keeping the dinghy bailed out. At long last I rowed out of the channel and now between us and shore there was a mile of open water. Here a strong current swept us away from our objective and I fought hard to make the beach. My hands were blistered and numb from straining and it was with difficulty that I kept hold of the oars.

Finally, three and a half hours after leaving the junk, we beached the dinghy and staggered ashore. There was the wharf we had seen, and moored to it was a small launch. A man climbed onto the wharf and then came down the beach toward us. He wore dirty shorts, a gray undershirt and a battered felt hat. He showed no apparent surprise at seeing us on the beach. Extending his hand as he came up he said, "My name's Harry Pierce." And I, thinking suddenly of that famous meeting in the heart of darkest Africa, grasped his hand and replied, "I'm Doctor Petersen and this is Mrs. Petersen. We ran on a reef out there." Never was a man more casual than this one—but Harry Pierce was an Australian and Australians are proud of their casualness. He excused himself for his appearance and invited us to join him in a cup of tea. He called for a couple of native boys to carry our gear, and we followed our surprising host up a steep hill. From the top, we had a magnificent view of the ocean, showing the green outline of a vast web of reefs, dotted with numerous small islands. A tiny black speck far out on the reef showed where our junk lay wounded. The winding blue passage through which we had attempted to sail was clearly traced.

"That's called Snake Passage," Harry remarked. "The natives have a story about a great snake that swam from this island to Rossel Island and that's the trail he left through the coral."

I fully agreed that only a snake could have made such a crooked passage. A little farther along the path, we came to the white house I had gazed at so long from the reef. It was a new home that Harry Pierce was in the process of building. He showed us around inside and then led the way to his present camp. Here, in a cleared area, were a number of buildings all showing the marks of great age. Harry's bedroom, office and trade store was a small house, roofed and sided with rusty corrugated iron. Why it did

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

not collapse was a mystery, because most of the supporting beams had long since been turned into powdery skeleton by generations of white ants. The interior was like a curio shop. A desk built of packing cases was littered with dusty papers. On a homemade square table stood a scarred radio and a pressure kerosene lamp surrounded by as intriguing an assortment of junk as I've ever seen: trocas shells, native shell money, stick tobacco, betel nuts, a native tomahawk, dog-eared paper-backed books, knives, gold scales, and an old Webby revolver. Three smooth camphorwood chests served as chairs. In one corner was a narrow cot draped with a mosquito netting. A huge washbasin rested on a boxwood stand near the wall and over it hung a badly peeled oval mirror. On the floor a large ornate pitcher, chipped but serviceable, contained the water for washing. An assortment of rifles and shotguns leaned against one wall while shoes and boots, both leather and rubber, were scattered about the floor.

Adjacent to this building was an L-shaped thatched-roof structure without walls. At one end was a large wood-burning range and hanging from a post were pots and pans and a screened cupboard. A long table, where Harry usually ate his lonely meals, stood at the other end of the building. A chest of drawers and a crude homemade cupboard held an odd assortment of dishes, cups and glasses. The rest of the furnishings of this outdoor combination kitchen and dining room were parts of pumping machinery, shovels and gold-washing pans.

While we were looking around the camp, Pati, a Rossel Island native who served as Harry's cook and houseboy, had been preparing lunch. Tani, I'm sure, appreciated eating someone else's cooking and we both did full justice to the Irish stew, bread, butter, tea, milk and fruit. Most of the food supply was canned and came via boat from Samarai, a port two hundred miles farther west, about every three months. He had three cows which gave him plenty of milk, and a few chickens, and some years before someone had planted orange trees. Sudest grew no edible products except mangos, coconuts and sago. There were, of course, plenty of fish and shellfish to be caught on the reefs, but the natives did little fishing and Harry did not have the time. It was easier and simpler to live on canned things.

## SHIPWRECK!

After lunch, we walked back into the hills, where Harry showed us his placer mining project with the pumps, nozzles, and sluice boxes. There was gold to be found, Harry explained, but it was difficult to get enough water to wash it out. Later in the afternoon, while Tani stayed in camp to rest, Harry and I went down to his cutter so that he could finish the repairs, as he said he would try to pull the junk off the reef the next day. That evening we had a spot of whiskey, a delicious dinner and then sat listening to the radio news, smoking and talking.

Harry Pierce had had a roving life but was now settled on Sudest, engaged in gold mining and gathering a resinous gum used in paint manufacturing. He bartered calico or tobacco with the natives for the gum, but he did most of the mining himself. His was a lonely life, for the only other white person he saw regularly was another trader who made a run from Rossel Island to Samarai about every two or three months, carrying gum and orchids one way and supplies and mail the other.

When bedtime came a place was fixed for us in the open dining room. The tropical night was warm and clear, with friendly stars close overhead. We lay awake for a long while after all lights were out, listening to the mysterious sounds that came through the night. Some we knew as flying foxes, screeching in the mango trees, and owls hooting; others we could not recognize, such as shrill persistent whistles, and a strange knocking sound that came in regular beats of six, rising in pitch with each and then falling into silence, to begin again in a few minutes. Imagination ran riot. The night was alive with unseen activity, and when at last we fell asleep I dreamed of wild cannibals and great serpents swimming through foamy reefs.

After breakfast the following morning, we started out for the junk in Harry Pierce's cutter, *Overseas*, taking some ten Papuans with us. Harry edged slowly into tricky Snake Passage, and during that ride I realized just how far I had rowed. The junk was still high up on the coral ledge and, as we studied her, wondering what had happened to Pimi, that pup suddenly popped her head over the bulwarks with her long ears flying in the wind. Harry anchored his cutter on the coral ledge across the passage and we rowed over to the junk. Pimi howled with joy when we climbed

aboard. An inspection revealed that the forward forecandle was flooded and that the galley and cabin had about two feet of water in the bilge. At first, Harry expressed the opinion that we would not be able to float the junk until the spring tide, but we set to work stripping the *Hummel Hummel* of all movable gear which we sent over to the cutter. The wide hole up forward could not be patched, but a watertight bulkhead kept the water out of the rest of the ship. About one o'clock, Tani fixed a lunch for the three of us and I gave the native boys some rice to cook on the *Overseas* for their lunch.

At high tide, we all started pushing and prying at the junk in an attempt to move her off the coral ledge. The channel was not wide enough for the cutter to do any tugging. The Sudest men were standing and walking on the coral, which amazed me, for it is terrifically sharp, but apparently it did not bother their feet. Four heavy poles broke without budging the junk, and I began to lose hope of getting her off. The wind turned surprisingly cold and the Papuans, standing up to their waists in the water, shivered. Just when we were about to give up, the junk edged over toward the channel. Then everyone set up a wild yelling as we frantically shoved. Suddenly the junk slid off the reef and settled down by the bow, but she did not sink. Good, tough, Chinese junk! A line was taken to the cutter and we started the long tow ashore. Our progress was so slow the sun had set before we had covered half the distance. Harry did not want to take the risk of towing after dark so he anchored the junk on a reef and left three boys aboard to bail her during the night.

The next day we had the junk alongside of the wharf, where she was stripped of rigging and ballast. At high tide, we floated her up on the beach, and secured her there.

When Harry Pierce heard my story of how we happened to reach Sudest, he said we were lucky we did not go on the reef we had sighted the first night. This barrier reef, extending fifteen miles off Sudest in a south and southeasterly direction, had wrecked many a ship. On a chart, he pointed out the reefs lying between Sudest and Rossel Islands and the narrow channel between them. Yet we had sailed without a course, not knowing where we were, through that dangerous area at night. We could

## SHIPWRECK!

consider ourselves extremely fortunate in being able to save our ship.

The spot where we had landed on Sudest Island, and where Harry Pierce was building his new home, was called Griffin Point. A dry belt extends through that section, and we were thankful for that, as we had had more than our share of rain. It was nice to be dry for a while. The country back of Griffin Point was not at all tropical-appearing, and, except for the coconut palms found around the villages, the country reminded me of parts of California, with low rolling hills and large stretches of grassy land. The one feature marring the beauty of Sudest was the mangrove trees that grew at tide level almost completely around the island. From seaward, the shore presented a leafy bulwark that appeared harmless enough, but once through the leafy covering you entered a weird maze of bare, slimy trunks and branches that twisted and turned upon themselves like a nest of writhing snakes. It is a breeding place for swarms of biting sandflies and mosquitoes. But, if one braves those pests, there are delicious oysters to be gathered at low tide from the mangrove roots and entwining branches. At times, large fish are trapped in this labyrinth and the natives go there to spear them.

The Sudest people were the wildest natives we had yet seen in our travels. One could read about such people and maybe see made-up types in a film production, but there we were actually walking around among them. Harry Pierce, who had traveled all over Papua and New Guinea, said that the Sudest native was probably the meekest and poorest type of Papuan. The real wild Papuans, he said, were to be found among the inland people in certain sections of Papua and New Guinea. But to us, those Sudest people were frightening enough as I am sure they would be to anyone not accustomed to seeing them. One thing Harry impressed upon us was not to judge Papuans by seeing one or two tribes. It appears they differ greatly from island to island, coastal people from mountain people, northern coast people from southern people, in physique, color, language and customs. Apparently, the Sudest people were not as warlike as some of their neighbors, for in the old days head-hunters from nearby Booker Island used to raid Sudest frequently. An old graybeard I met on

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

the beach one day explained. "Sudest man, he no like fight. He fright, he run away." For this reason the few villages on Sudest are well concealed back in the hills.

The Sudest natives vary in color from black to light brown. All the men have huge upstanding mops of frizzy hair. We were frequently startled to see some of the young dandies with red hair and learned they had obtained that color by washing their hair in peroxide of hydrogen. That item was so popular that no trader would think his stock complete without it. The practice first started to rid their heads of vermin, but, when the unusual color resulted, the original idea was forgotten and vanity became the motive. Both the men and women chew betel nut and lime incessantly. The small walnut-sized nuts grow in clusters on a slender graceful type of palm. The lime is made from shells which have been roasted and powdered. The continued use of this lime seems to turn the teeth black, and while the nut is being chewed the saliva is blood red. A smile from one of these people has a frightening effect.

The Sudest people were small, the men possibly five feet in height and the women less. The men usually wore a calico *lava-lava* or else a woven grass belt with a flap of cloth hanging down in front. The women wore short grass skirts slung very low on their hips. In this part of the world, the men are very vain and strive weirdly for the proper sartorial effects. Most of them had slit ear lobes with a variety of ear plugs, and dozens of brightly colored grass bands or strings of beads around their upper arms, their legs and their waists. They were fond of sticking feathers or leaves in their hair, and of attaching streamers of leaves or paper to their elbows, wrists and knees. In time we grew used to them but they were certainly startling at first.

Sudest and the other hundreds of islands making up the Louisiade Archipelago have an interesting historical background. They had been the scene of fierce tribal wars, wild cannibal orgies and murders. Hardened labor recruiters and tough pearlers at one time sailed their ships through those islands. Sudest itself had once been a roaring gold-mining camp. And characters like German Harry and Nick the Greek made a profitable sideline by transporting ambitious miners up from Australia. Many found

## SHIPWRECK!

death and few found gold on Sudest. Yet, for all the fighting and the struggle for survival that went on among the islands of the Louisades, they have not changed much from those early days except for the actors who have passed from the stage. Many of the islands are uninhabited today. The natives who have survived are no longer head-hunters or cannibals. But these islands seem far removed from the world of civilized man.

After a few weeks' rest, I went to work on the *Hummel Hummel*. A temporary patch was placed over the hole in the bottom, a sheet of copper and tar on the outside and cement inside. The junk was then floated, and remained fairly dry. A few days later, the ballast was placed aboard and then all the other gear. We were soon to leave Sudest and the hospitality of Harry Pierce. Harry Osborne, sometimes known as the "King of Rossel Island," had passed a few weeks before, going eastward to Rossel in his sturdy ship, the *Yela Gili*. He promised to tow us through the tricky Louisades to Samarai on his return westward. There we hoped to get the junk repaired. We had enjoyed our unexpected stay on Sudest. Griffin Point had not been a port of call for us, but we look back upon the two months spent there as two of the happiest months of the whole voyage.





*CHAPTER* **XV**



## *War! And Farewell Hummel Hummel*

EARLY ON THE MORNING OF OCTOBER 23, 1941, WE LEFT SUDEST under tow of the *Yela Gili*. Harry Pierce and most of the "boys" were down on the ancient wharf to say good-by. We waved until we rounded a point of land and they were lost to view. We faced ahead to another horizon. This time the voyage was not as exciting, maybe, but we were still going westward. The wind was fair that morning and I raised the mainsail to help out. Mr. Osborne had kindly loaned me four of his Rossel Island boys to help handle the junk. Tani and I were not used to so many hands, but it was nice to be able to relax and enjoy the scenery.

At seven o'clock that evening, our party dropped anchor off the picturesque island of Moturina in the Calvados chain of islands. This island, like so many through the Louisade, has an interesting history. The natives were once exceedingly warlike and were great head-hunters. In their long canoes, they made raids on all neighboring islands, even as far away as Sudest. Once two white pearl-ers in a small cutter anchored off the island and were murdered by the natives. The government sent a gunboat

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

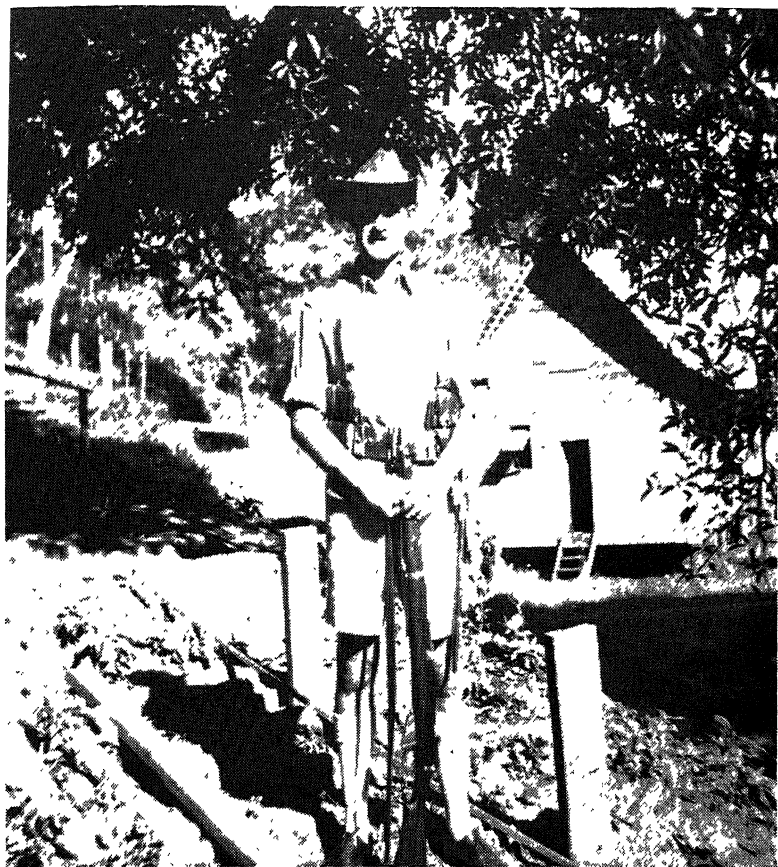
to arrest the ringleaders. When they received no satisfaction from anyone, they shelled the place. In later years the now peaceful natives said the shelling had caused no harm, as the people hid behind large rocks.

We stayed the night at Moturina, cheered by the thought that the natives were now peaceable and friendly, and left again early the next morning. All that day we sailed among numerous beautiful islands unlike Sudest, for these had lovely broad sandy beaches. Most of them were uninhabited. Here surely one could pick out his own particular island home. Coral reefs revealed their presence as brownish green patches in the blue water between the islands. One had to be continually on the alert in those waters, and if the sun was not right it was dangerous to sail. We passed through narrow channels between ledges of tinted coral, where the current flowed swiftly in dangerous tide rips. It was a tropical picture such as one might dream about with the dozens of green islands in a variety of sizes, blue water and white sandy beaches. Then we passed into the Conflict group where coral atolls rising but a few feet above the water were planted with coconut trees set in orderly rows.

October 25, 1941, was an eventful day for us as we anchored at Samarai, Papua. Our voyage had come to an end, although we did not know it at the time. Tremendous world events were shaping up that would write finis to our voyage. We had no crystal ball to gaze in, and at that time we were thinking only of repairs and of continuing to Port Moresby.

The small island of Samarai lies in the China Straits off the tip of southeastern Papua. It was a colorful gem of an island with a profusion of flowers and neat, well-kept homes, for this was the port of entry for southeastern Papua. One could walk around the whole island in twenty minutes.

When the *Hummel Hummel* anchored off the wharf, quite a bit of interest was created. Papuans and whites lined the shore to have a look. We rowed ashore in Osborne's dinghy and met Harry Russell, the Collector of Customs. I explained to him our recent difficulties and how we happened to land in his port. He immediately invited us to his house to meet his wife who, in turn, asked us to stay for dinner. He suggested I write a letter to the authorities at Port Moresby.



THE SKIPPER PLAYS A NEW ROLE. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor brought the *Hummel Hummel's* voyaging to an end, Dr. Petersen joined the New Guinea Volunteers. Here he is seen in uniform in 1942.



## WAR' AND FAREWELL HUMMEL HUMMEL

The very day we dropped anchor a note was sent out to us from Mrs. Scully, proprietor of one of Samarai's two hotels, asking us if we would like a hot bath and a good meal. And a little boy, Alan Pomeroy, stood on the waterfront and heard everyone talking about a Chinese junk. He studied the junk for a while and then raced off home.

"Mummy!" he called excitedly as he rushed into his home. "There's a Chinese junk down at the wharf!"

"Now, Alan," his mother reproved, "what are you talking about? A Chinese junk? Well, I never!"

"There is so," the boy replied. "It's one of those boats that travel along the coast of China and picks up junk."

Later, to reciprocate the friendliness shown by everyone, I gave a benefit travel talk for the Australian Red Cross. It was held in the local war memorial hall and the entire town turned out for the event.

When a letter from Port Moresby arrived giving me permission to repair the *Hummel Hummel*, we had the junk towed to the island of Kwato, about a mile and a half from Samarai. Kwato Mission was first called to my attention on Sudest Island. That was the place to take the junk, I was told, for there I would find a slipway and carpenters.

The Kwato Mission was founded some fifty years ago in Papua by the Reverend Charles Abel, an Englishman. His ideas differed from the accepted ones of most missionaries in those days. He believed the natives should be given something more than spiritual training. Therefore he acquired the beautiful island of Kwato and began his work first with the Loggia people, who lived on a large island near by. At Kwato he built a great house on the highest elevation of the island, a cricket field, and schools and homes for the Papuans he wished to train. He traveled throughout southeastern Papua in the days when head-hunting was still common practice, trying to understand the Papuan and his needs. He became respected for his honesty and sincerity, and the villages began sending children and young people to Kwato for training. His wife helped in the work of teaching. Four Abel children were born on Kwato; two boys and two girls. The children, now grown, are carrying on the work of their far-sighted father.

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

When I was there, Kwato had a large lumber mill, cabinet shop, machine shop and a shipbuilding yard. All were run by Papuans under the direction of white teachers. They had built two fifty-foot diesel ships for the mission's use. There was a fine concrete schoolhouse, a hospital and surgery. The English doctor was assisted by Papuan orderlies and nurses. Papuan girls learned cooking, sewing, nursing, child welfare and hygiene; the boys, woodwork, shipbuilding, machine-shop work, and agriculture. This modern mission station did not neglect the spiritual side of the Papuan's training, either. A fine stone church that some day will be a real monument to Papua and the Papuans was nearly completed while we were there. The plans were made by white men, but Papuans did the masonry, the fine woodcarving, and joining. It was their church and a reminder to the world of the energy and self-sacrifice of Charles Abel of Kwato.

There are some who do not approve of the modern type of mission work. They are people who want the missionaries to stick to "preaching" and let the business of teaching the natives fall to traders, planters and labor recruiters. From what I have seen, I will say that the modern type of missionary, as represented by those hard-working men and women in Papua, is doing a big job in a modern way. They are helping the Papuan to understand the white man. They are giving the hands that once hurled spears tools to work with, and they are giving the Papuan himself the knowledge of how to work. Their idea is not to put the Papuan on a competitive basis with the white people but to instruct him along lines which will enable him to be a more useful member of the society in which he finds himself. The loyalty of the Papuans in World War II is a tribute to the missionaries of Papua who practice what they preach.

With the help of some Papuan boys, we stripped the junk clean. All the gear and ballast were taken ashore and stacked under a giant badila tree that grew on the edge of a cricket field near the beach. As in other places, the people, Papuans and whites, were amazed at the amount and variety of our stores. No one would ever believe that so much stuff could come out of such a small ship. After we had removed everything, we pulled the junk up on the slipway and then skidded her over onto a cradle. Work was slow to start on the junk, as the native ship carpenters



## WAR! AND FAREWELL HUMMEL HUMMEL

were busy on a special job. We decided that we were not in such a hurry after all, and that if we missed the proper season for sailing in that part of the world, we would wait till next season. That's what the tropics do to you. Therefore a palm branch shelter was built over the junk to protect her from the tropical sun. Tani and I, Pimi and Supy (a small marsupial we had picked up on Sudest) and Pepita, a parrot, with much of our gear, moved into a newly built semi-Papuan house as guest of the Kwato folk. It was a delightful place. There was a large veranda where we had our meals and could look out over the broad green cricket field, the wharf, the beach and the blue water beyond. The inside walls of our new home were made of cane woven matting, which seemed to us ideal for the tropics. A week or two on the island and we regained the feeling of "shoreside" people.

On Monday, December 8, 1941, we arose as usual to greet a day that seemed the same as many another, a typical lazy tropical morning. We had just sat down to breakfast when I heard Geoffrey Baskett's voice calling from the Abel house on the hill. "Doc," he called excitedly, "the Japanese are bombing Hawaii!" For a moment I could not believe my ears. I had Geoffrey repeat his words. War! Breakfast was forgotten as we hurried up the hill to listen to the news. Americans had talked of war with Japan for so many years. Now that it was upon us it didn't seem that it could be true. A few minutes later a hushed group was crowded around the radio listening to the tragic reports: Pearl Harbor heavily bombed—Wake, Guam, Midway islands attacked—Manila and Hong Kong bombed! It was a new kind of warfare, swift moving and very deadly. My mind was in a turmoil. So it had started! War in the Pacific! Where would I fit into the picture, I wondered. I thought of all our friends at home. What excitement must be going on over there, Sunday, December 7.

Silently, Tani and I walked back down the hill to our house. Tani heated the coffee and we sat down to eat our papaya.

"Well, it's come at last," I said, breaking the silence. "War! And here we are stuck on a little island in Papua. If only we were home instead of away out here. Tani, I'm going to get into the service."

"I knew you'd want to get in," she replied. "It will mean sepa-

## HUMMEL HUMMEL

ration for us, but that's the only thing to do. We have been so close together, it'll seem strange to be separated. Poor little junky, too. I wonder what will become of her? But that is such a small thing compared to what some are losing."

We remembered that our strange voyage had started with bombs falling on China, and now it had come to an end with the prospect of bombs falling on New Guinea. It is difficult to part with a ship that has carried you safely over 17,000 miles of the great Pacific. After four years of sailing, our voyage had come to an end. We said our last farewell to the *Hummel Hummel*, which was sitting on the white beach of Kwato under a protecting canopy of palm fronds. Her high black, red, and white stern with the Chinese characters proclaimed to the world the noble type of craft she was. Her bulging eyes looked out to the far horizon. I could hear a voice whisper, "Farewell, O Captain and Mate! I will wait for your return and once again we shall sail the blue seas together."

"Farewell, valiant craft! The winds and waves and reefs could not stop you. You who knew the wailing of the sea birds, the splashing of the porpoise, and the glint of sunlight on flying fish wings; you who had sailed through fog-shrouded seas, who have known the fury and the tenderness of His Majesty the Ocean; you who have seen a hundred golden dawns, and have sailed serenely into a like number of velvet sunsets. Farewell! May those who follow me be gentle with you until I return."

THE END















